

# TOTAL ECLIPSE

BOOK



THREE

ZZED

AIRBOY

ARTESACE

TACHYON



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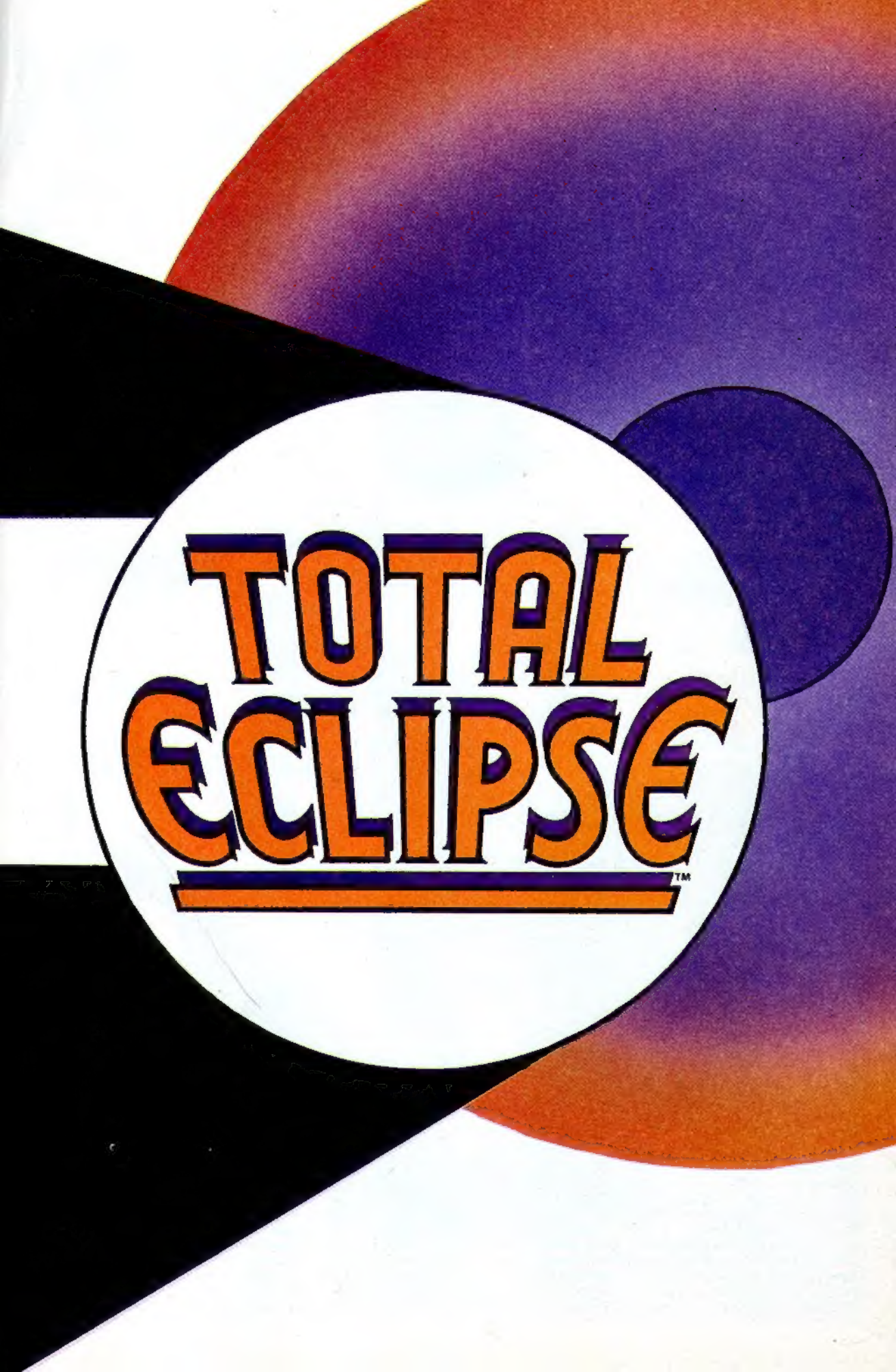
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# TOTAL ECLIPSE

TM



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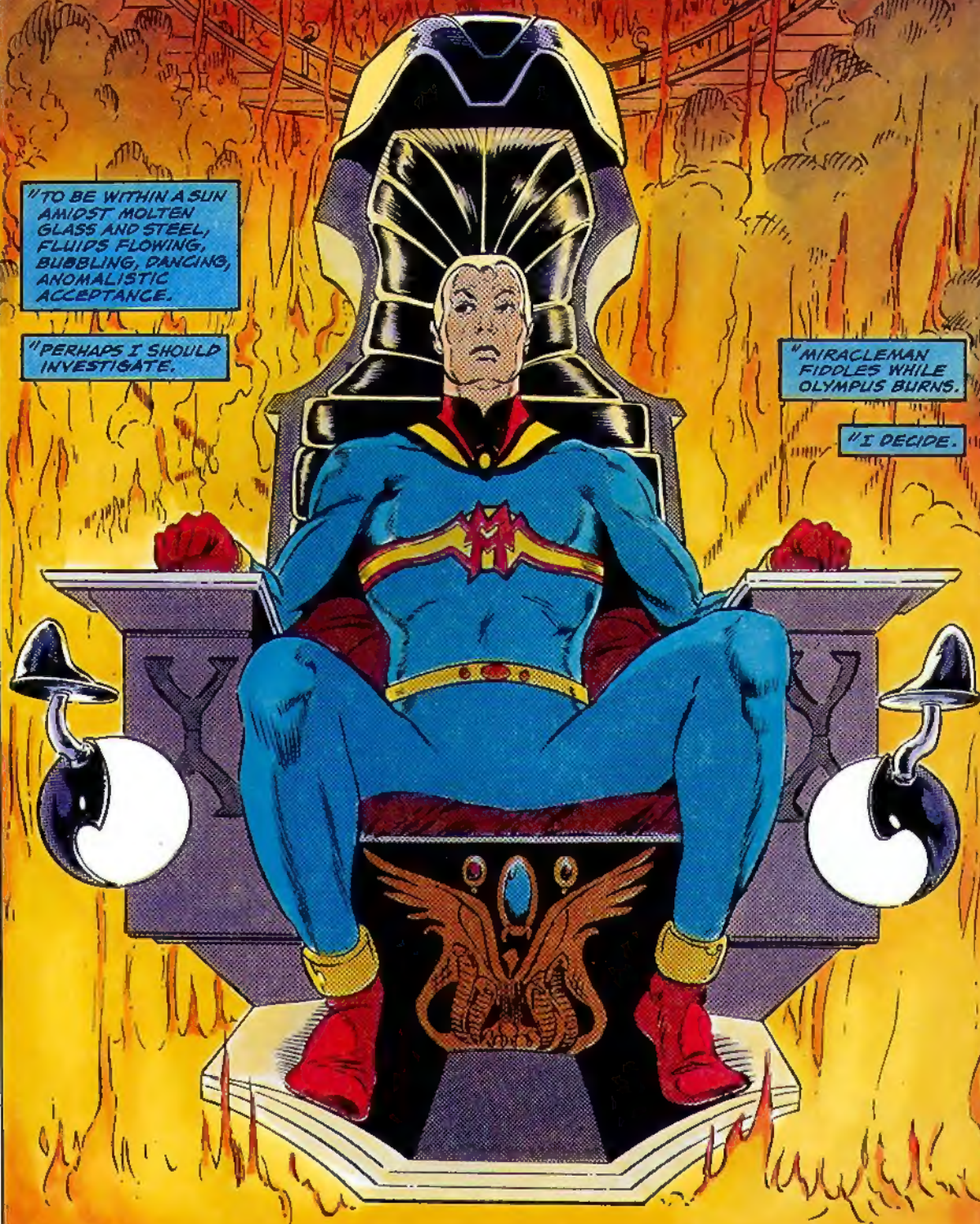
# HEROES AND VILLAINS

"TO BE WITHIN A SUN  
AMIDST MOLTEN  
GLASS AND STEEL,  
FLUIDS FLOWING,  
BUBBLING, DANCING,  
ANOMALISTIC  
ACCEPTANCE.

"PERHAPS I SHOULD  
INVESTIGATE.

"MIRACLEMAN  
FIDDLES WHILE  
OLYMPUS BURNS.

"I DECIDE.







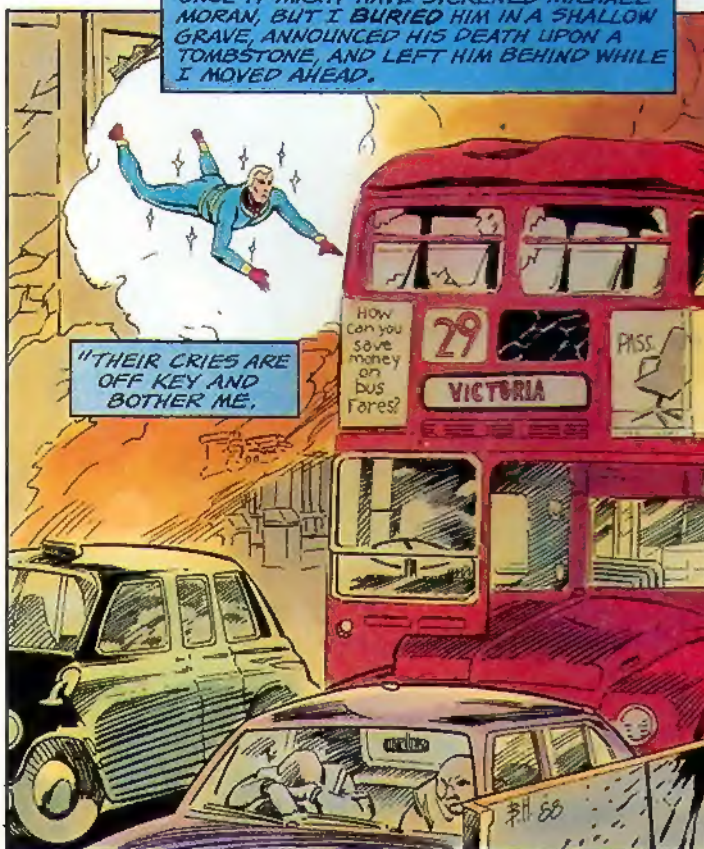
"THE WALLS MELT BEHIND ME, THEN FLOW BACK IN PLACE. A SEAMLESS SEPARATION."



"AROUND ME, RIPPLING HEATWAVES DO THEIR DANCE ACROSS LONDON, SKY TO SEWER, SUNSET TO RISE."

"I HAD NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE SUCH PAIN AGAIN."

"I SMELL THE BAKING FLESH, THE BUBBLING TAR, THE STINK OF SULPHUR. I TASTE THE FLAT BITTERNESS OF STEEL."



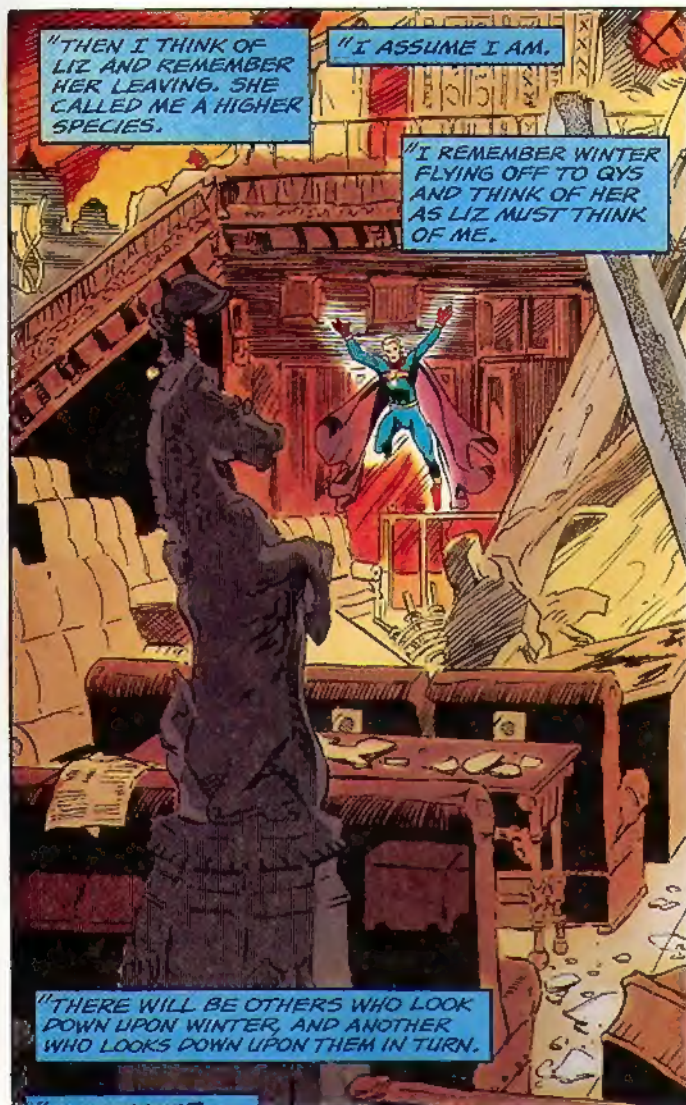
"ONCE IT MIGHT HAVE SICKENED MICHAEL MORAN, BUT I BURIED HIM IN A SHALLOW GRAVE, ANNOUNCED HIS DEATH UPON A TOMBSTONE, AND LEFT HIM BEHIND WHILE I MOVED AHEAD."

"A DIFFERENT GRAVE HERE, A PYRE ANNOUNCED BY PLAINTIVE WAILING."

"THEIR CRIES ARE OFF KEY AND BOTHER ME."

"I THINK OF MIRACLEWOMAN. PERHAPS I NEED HER NOW."





"THEN I THINK OF LIZ AND REMEMBER HER LEAVING. SHE CALLED ME A HIGHER SPECIES.

"I ASSUME I AM.

"I REMEMBER WINTER FLYING OFF TO QYS AND THINK OF HER AS LIZ MUST THINK OF ME.

"THERE WILL BE OTHERS WHO LOOK DOWN UPON WINTER, AND ANOTHER WHO LOOKS DOWN UPON THEM IN TURN.

"FIREDRAKE? THIS IS CERTAINLY WITHIN HIS PROVINCE. SOMEHOW I DOUBT HIS INVOLVEMENT.

"THE WARP-SMITHS? WHY? NO, NOT THEM, NO REASON.



"IDLE SPECULATION, LITTLE ELSE.



"LONDON IS DIFFERENT. I WONDER ABOUT THE CAUSE.



"NO LONGER IS THIS ANOMALISTIC ACCEPTANCE.

"I FIND MYSELF PUZZLED.



"A STATE NOT EXACTLY NEW TO ME.



"I HEAR THE CRIES AND TURN.  
BEHIND ME ARE THE MELTED  
REMAINS OF TWENTY OR MORE.  
I COUNT THEIR ARMS AND LEGS  
AS THEY MOVE TOWARD ME,  
THEIR VOICES SHRILL.

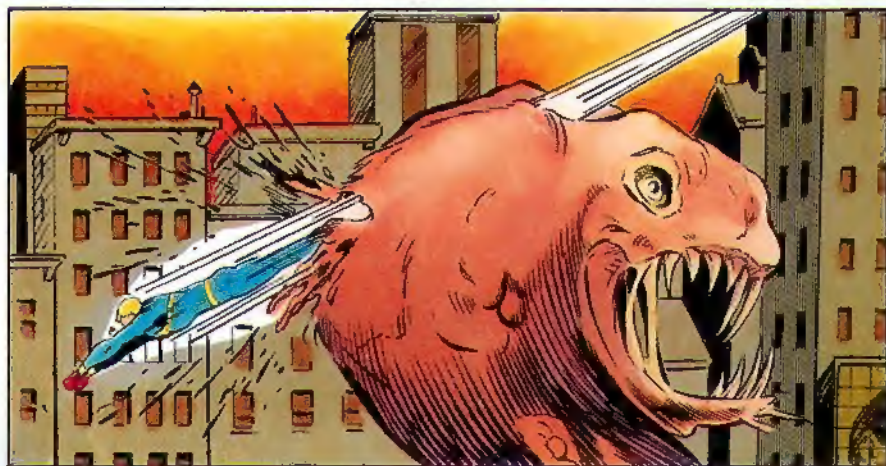
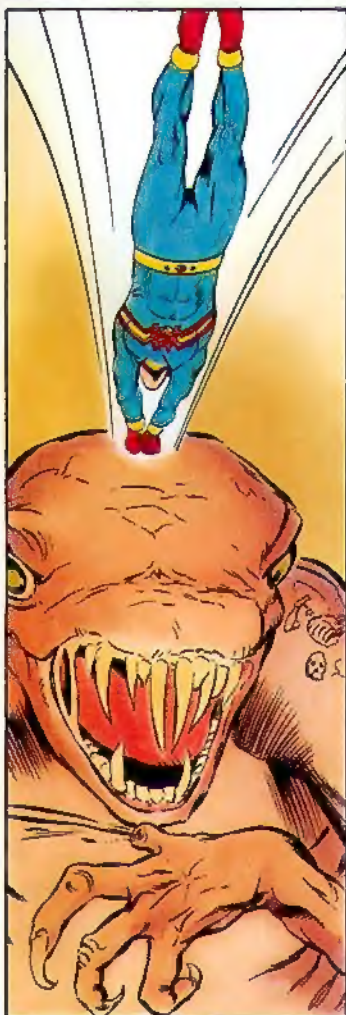
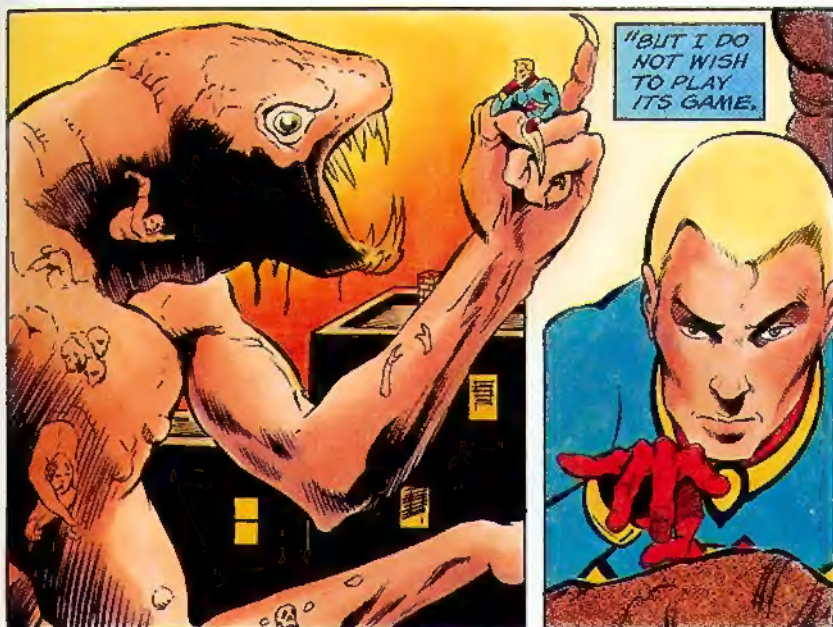
LISA

"THE FLESH SELTS OVER THEM,  
OBSCURING THEM, REMOVING THEIR  
INDIVIDUALITY. NO LONGER TWENTY,  
NOW ONE. NO LONGER UNIQUE---  
NOW SOME CREATURE WITH  
SMOOTHED FLESH UPON THE SCABS.

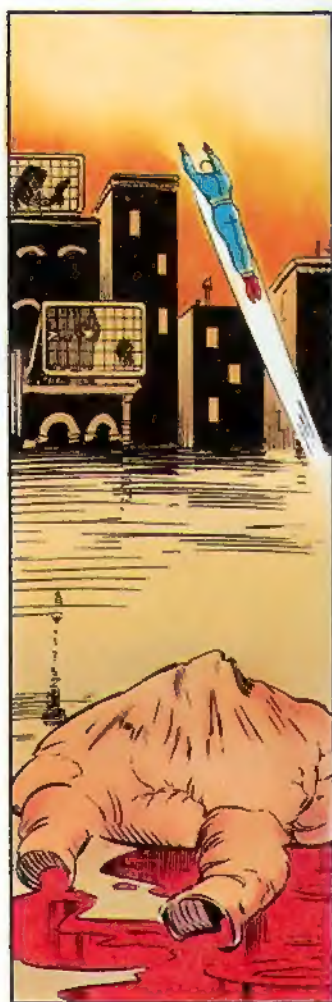
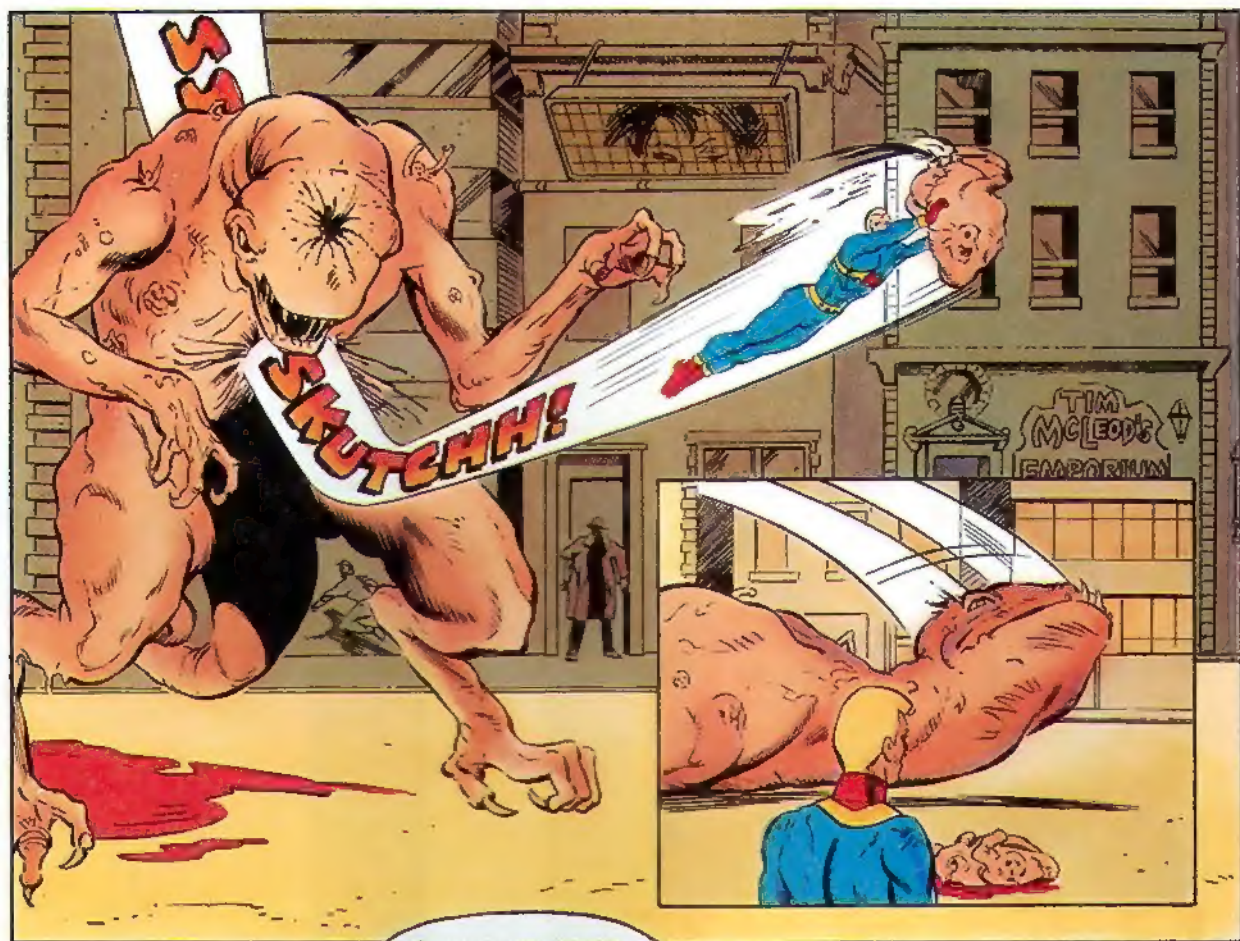
"IT SWIMS FORWARD  
IN ITS OWN BLOOD,  
A MELTING POT.

"I WONDER WHAT  
IT IS HERE FOR.









I AM PERPLEXED.  
NOTHING SEEMS TO  
HAVE CAUSED THE FIRES.  
NOTHING SEEMS RE-  
SPONSIBLE.

NOTHING TO  
STOP. NOTHING TO  
FIGHT. NOTHING  
TO DO.

I SAW.

YOU KNOW IT DOESN'T  
AFFECT US. THERE ARE  
PLEASURABLE WAYS  
TO IGNORE IT.

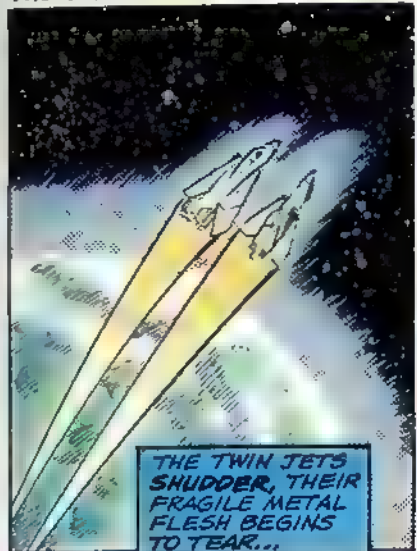
NO

I DON'T  
THINK SO.

AT LEAST  
NOT RIGHT  
NOW.

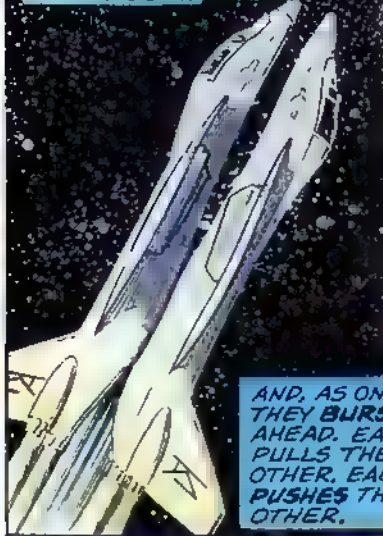


THEY RISE, SIDE BY SIDE, PUSHING INTO THE VELVET, PUSHING PAST THE ENVELOPE.



THE TWIN JETS SHUDDER, THEIR FRAGILE METAL FLESH BEGINS TO TEAR...

THEN, ON COMMAND, THEY JOIN.



AND, AS ONE, THEY BURST AHEAD. EACH PULLS THE OTHER, EACH PUSHES THE OTHER.

UNTIL THEY BREACH THE FINAL RESTRAINTS.

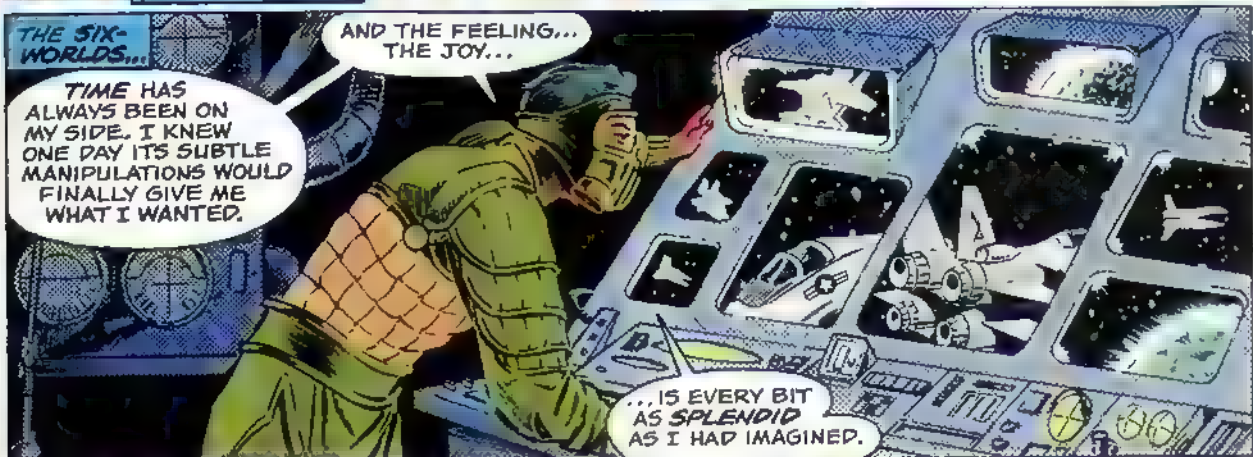


THE DARK SURROUNDS THEM... CARESSES THEM...

THE SIX-WORLDS...

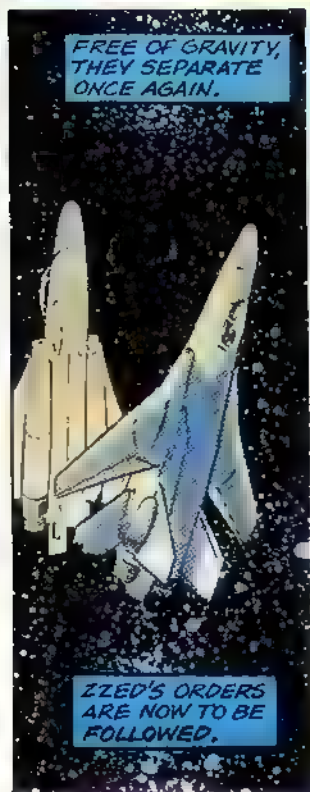
AND THE FEELING... THE JOY...

TIME HAS ALWAYS BEEN ON MY SIDE. I KNEW ONE DAY ITS SUBTLE MANIPULATIONS WOULD FINALLY GIVE ME WHAT I WANTED.



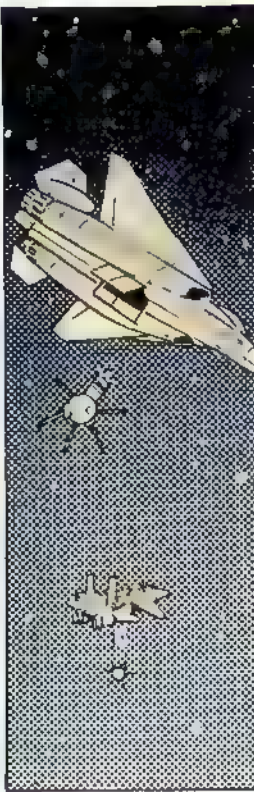
...IS EVERY BIT AS SPLENDID AS I HAD IMAGINED.

FREE OF GRAVITY, THEY SEPARATE ONCE AGAIN.



ZZED'S ORDERS ARE NOW TO BE FOLLOWED.

ACTIVATE RELEASE.

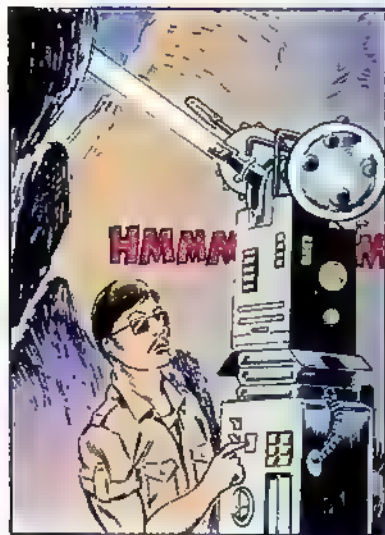
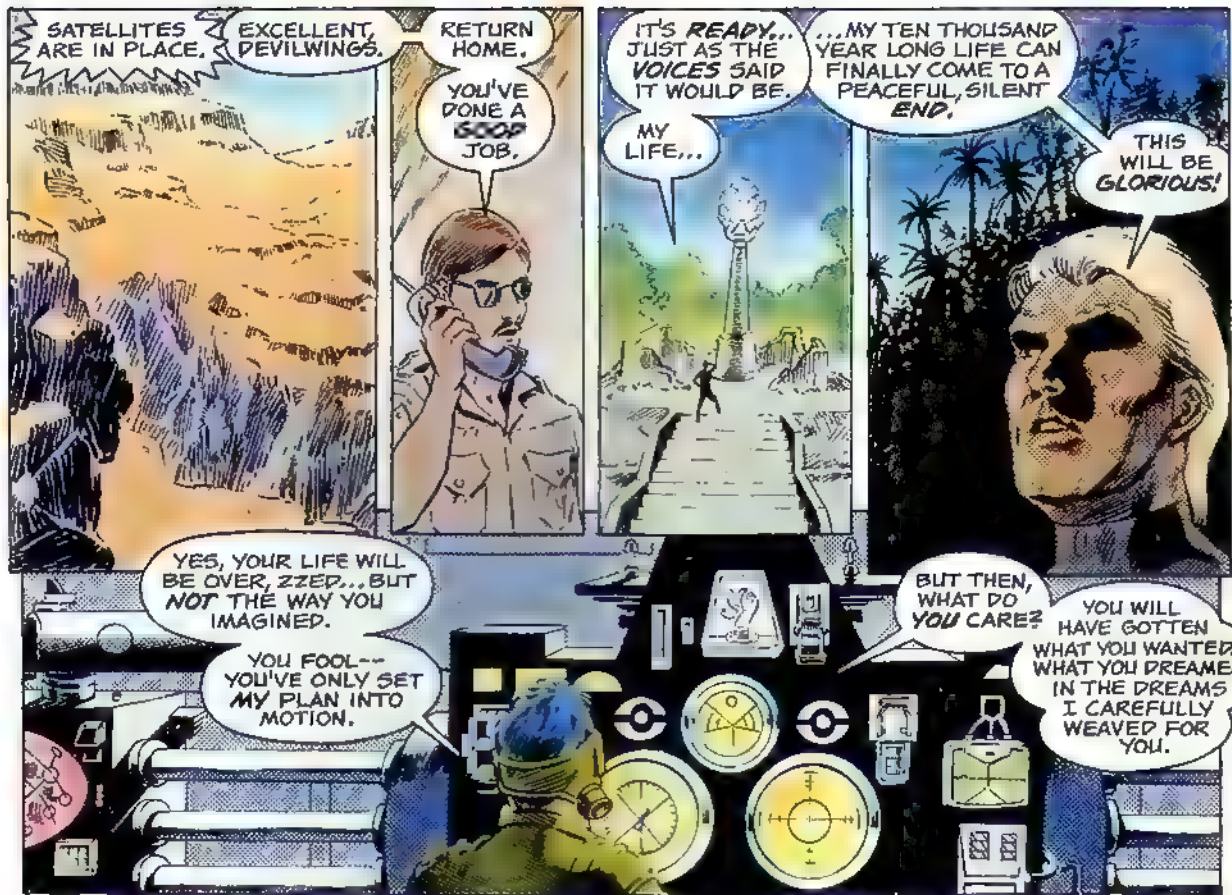


THEY'RE READY.

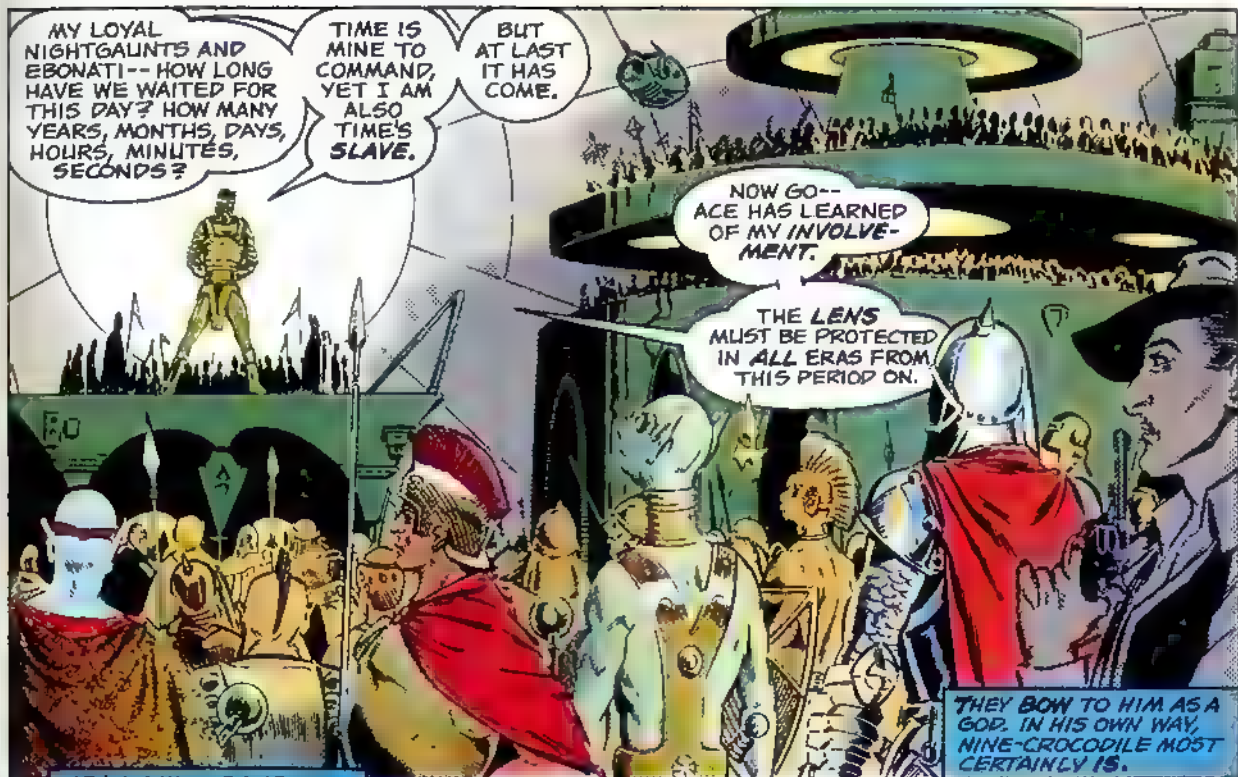
ALERT THEM BELOW.











MY LOYAL NIGHTGAUNTS AND EBNATI-- HOW LONG HAVE WE WAITED FOR THIS DAY? HOW MANY YEARS, MONTHS, DAYS, HOURS, MINUTES, SECONDS?

TIME IS MINE TO COMMAND, YET I AM ALSO TIME'S SLAVE.

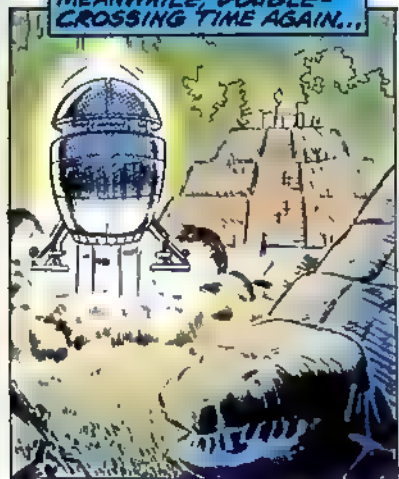
BUT AT LAST IT HAS COME.

NOW GO-- ACE HAS LEARNED OF MY INVOLVEMENT.

THE LENS MUST BE PROTECTED IN ALL ERAS FROM THIS PERIOD ON.

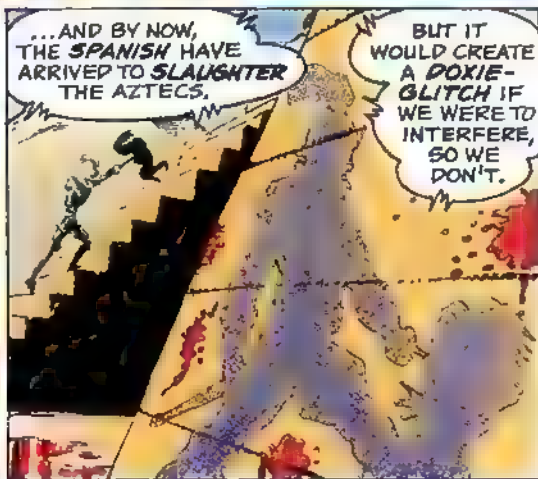
THEY BOW TO HIM AS A GOD. IN HIS OWN WAY, NINE-CROCODILE MOST CERTAINLY IS.

MEANWHILE, DOUBLE-CROSSING TIME AGAIN...



ACEY-DEUCE...

I KNOW, BRIDGET--THE LENS IS IN THIS TIME PERIOD, TOO.



...AND BY NOW, THE SPANISH HAVE ARRIVED TO SLAUGHTER THE AZTECS.

BUT IT WOULD CREATE A DOXIE-GLITCH IF WE WERE TO INTERFERE, SO WE DON'T.



PAMN, CROC-- WHAT'S HE UP TO NOW?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT CROC, ACEY--



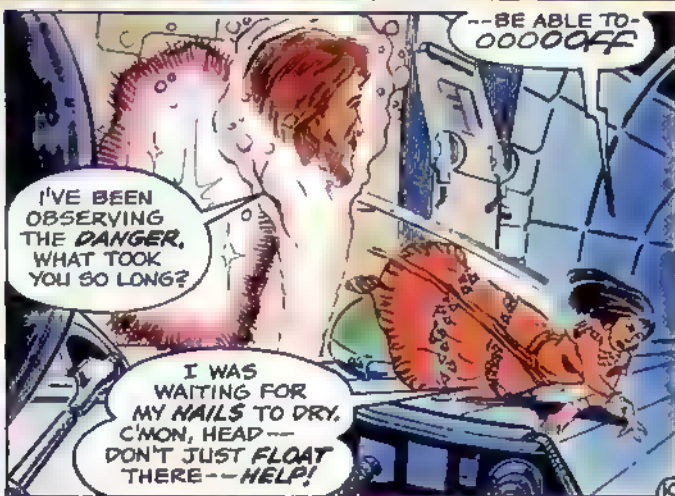
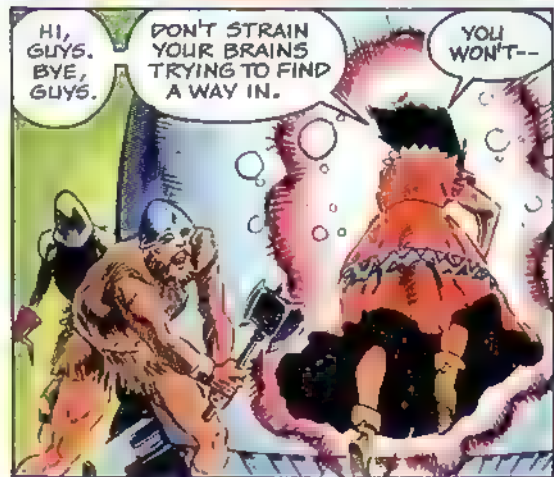
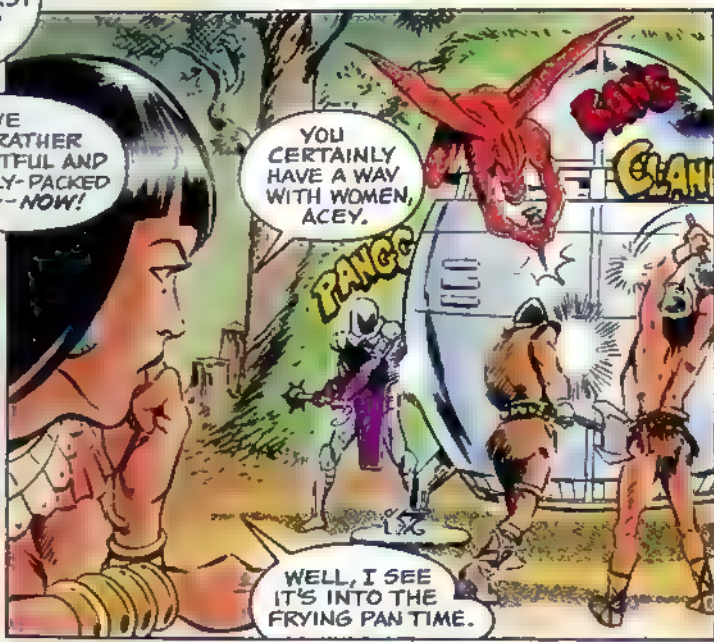
--I'M SUDDENLY MORE CONCERNED ABOUT HIS FAMILY!

NIGHTGAUNTS AND EBNATI AND BEARS, OH MY!

BOIT

BOIT



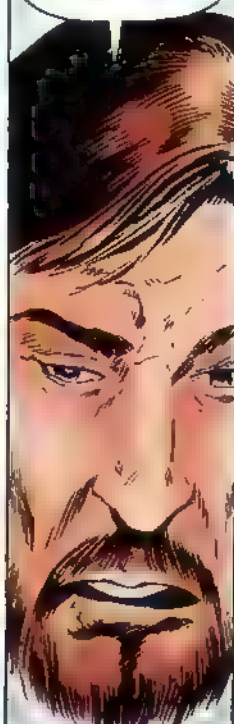




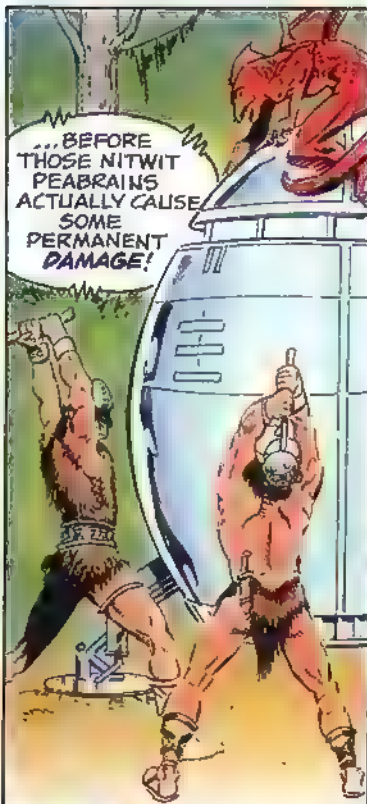
ACEY'S IN DIRE TROUBLE  
AND HE NEEDS OUR  
TIMELY AID TO BOTH  
RESCUE HIM AND SUPPLY  
THE PROPER THRILLS.



I'D SAY WE  
GET THE HELL  
OUT OF HERE...

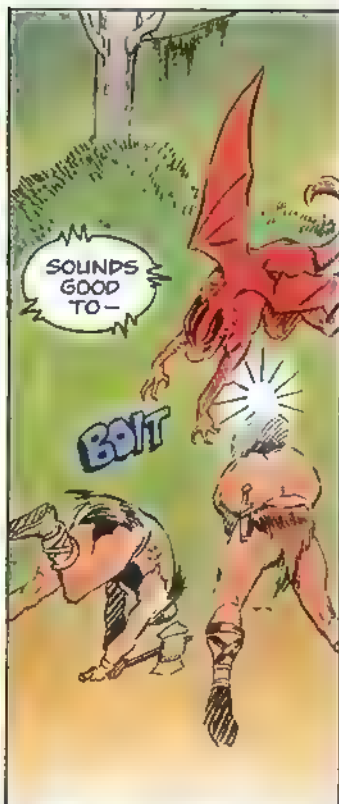


...BEFORE  
THOSE NITWIT  
PEABRAINS  
ACTUALLY CAUSE  
SOME  
PERMANENT  
DAMAGE!



SOUNDS  
GOOD  
TO—

BOIT



ACEY--

I WAS  
WONDERING  
WHERE YOU TWO  
TOOK OFF TO.



YOU  
SHOULD BE  
GLAD WE CAME  
BACK AT ALL.

C'MON--  
FORGET THEM!  
GET INSIDE.

YOU  
SPOIL  
ALL MY  
FUN.



I SAVED YOU,  
ACEY-DEUCE.

I KNOW,  
DEAR... AND  
I HAVE ONLY  
ONE THING  
TO SAY...

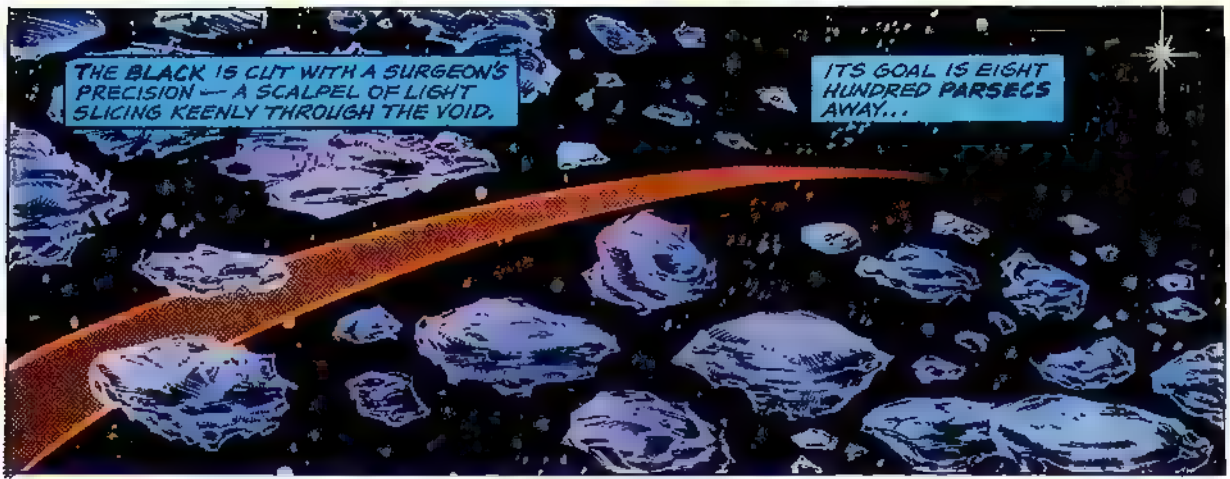


...YOU  
WAIT SO  
LONG THE  
NEXT TIME  
AND I'LL  
DECK YOU  
ONE.

MMMMM,  
YOU'RE SO  
SWEET WHEN  
YOU'RE NEAR-  
DEATHAL.





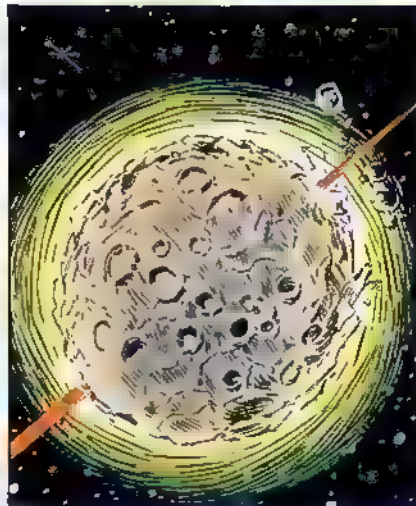


THE BLACK IS CUT WITH A SURGEON'S PRECISION — A SCALPEL OF LIGHT SLICING KEENLY THROUGH THE VOID.

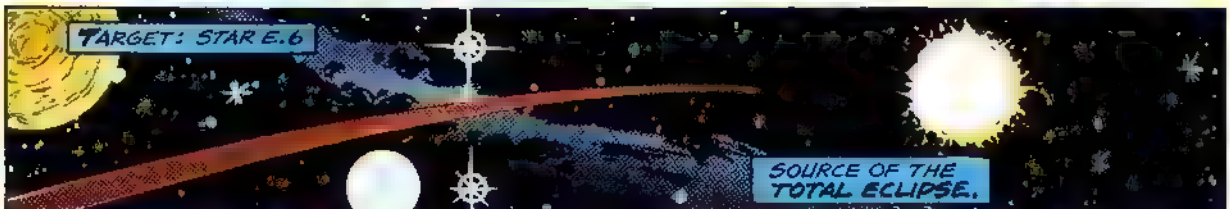
ITS GOAL IS EIGHT HUNDRED PARSECS AWAY...



WITH DELIBERATION, OBSTACLES ARE MET.



...AND REMOVED!



TARGET: STAR E.6

SOURCE OF THE TOTAL ECLIPSE.



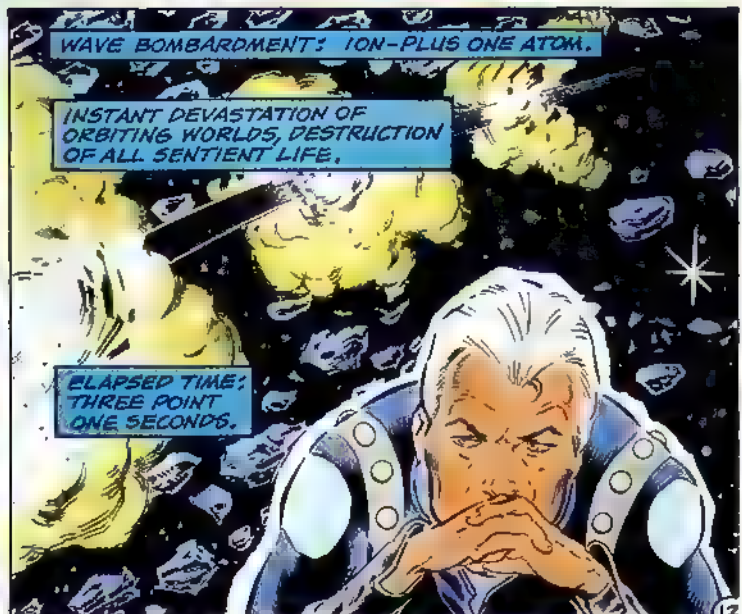
A WHITE STAR PULSATING WITH ION ENERGY. ANOTHER ANOMOLY.

ELAPSED TIME: THREE HOURS THIRTY-SIX MINUTES, EIGHTEEN SECONDS.



RESULTS:

PHYSICAL ALTERATION OF E.6.



WAVE BOMBARDMENT: ION-PLUS ONE ATOM.

INSTANT DEVASTATION OF ORBITING WORLDS, DESTRUCTION OF ALL SENTIENT LIFE.

ELAPSED TIME: THREE POINT ONE SECONDS.





SO, WHAT NOW, ACEY?

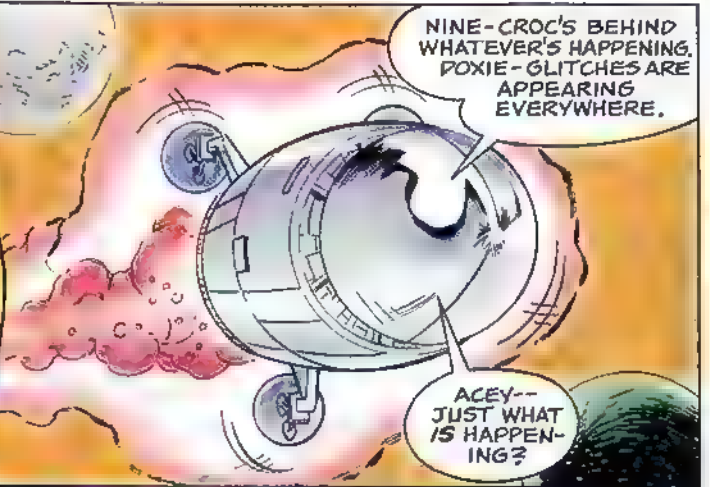
WE GO OVER WHAT WE KNOW.

OH, GOOD-- I JUST LOVE REHASHING THE PAST.



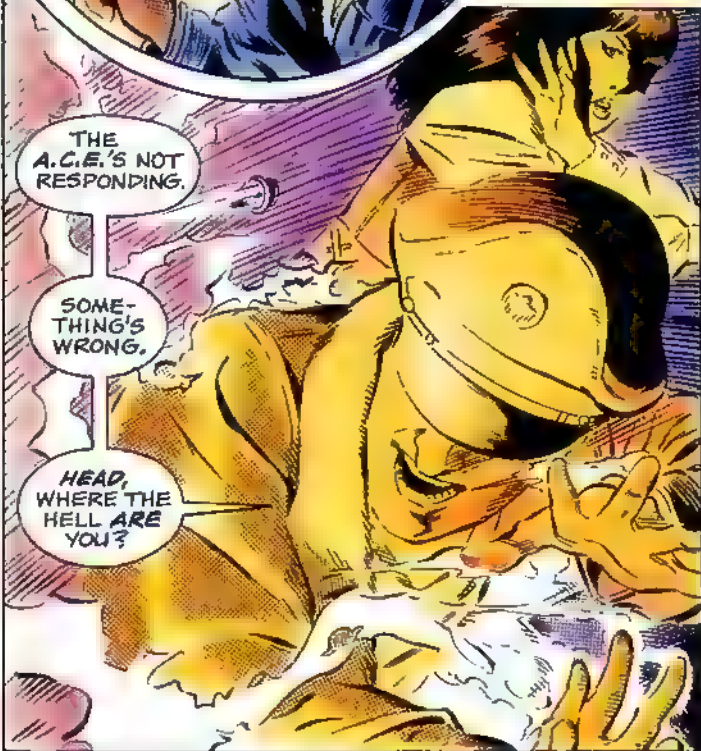
IT'S CALLED PLANNING. KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST AND YOU CAN DEDUCE HOW TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

UP AND AT 'EM, SHER-LOCK.



NINE-CROC'S BEHIND WHATEVER'S HAPPENING. DOXIE- GLITCHES ARE APPEARING EVERYWHERE.

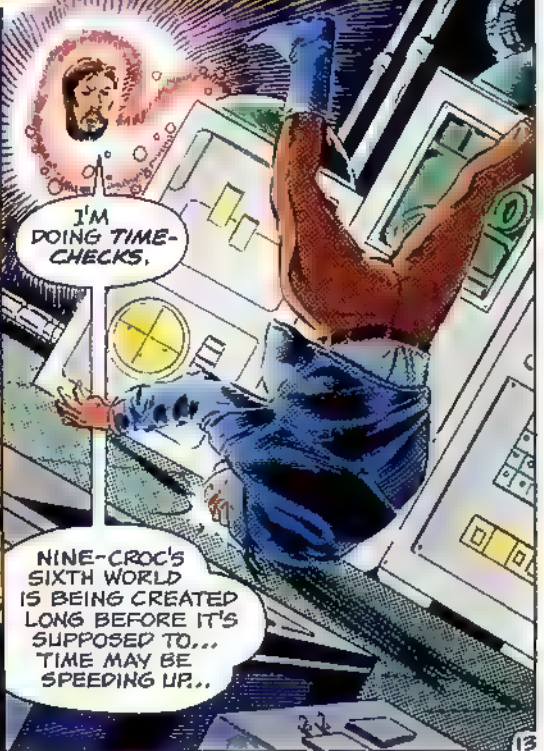
ACEY-- JUST WHAT IS HAPPENING?



THE A.C.E.'S NOT RESPONDING.

SOME-THING'S WRONG.

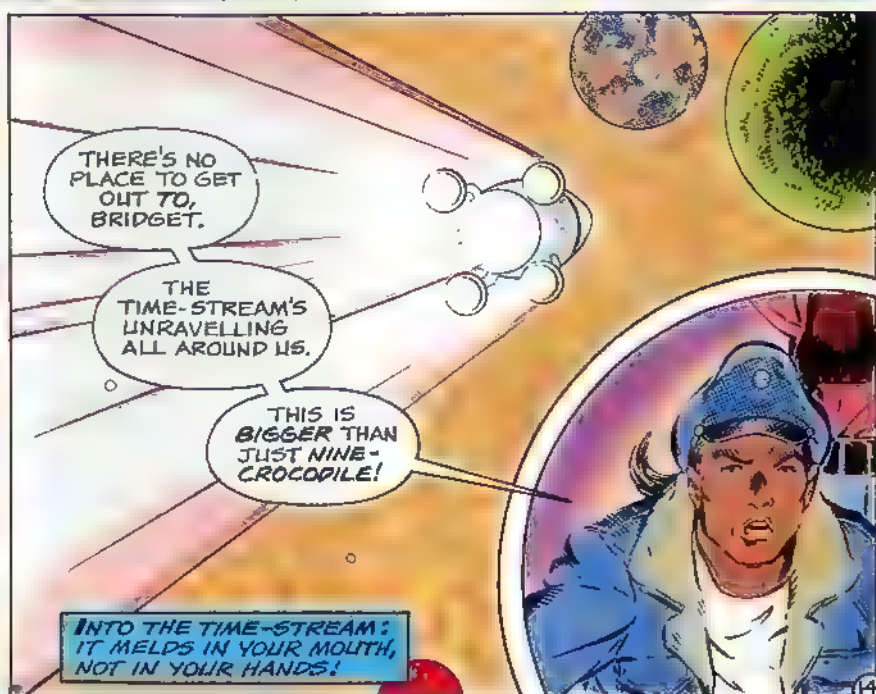
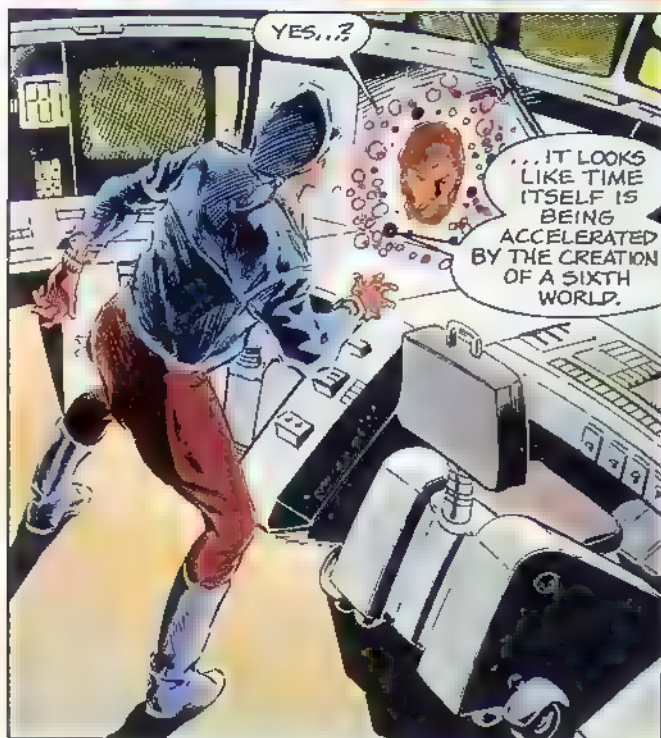
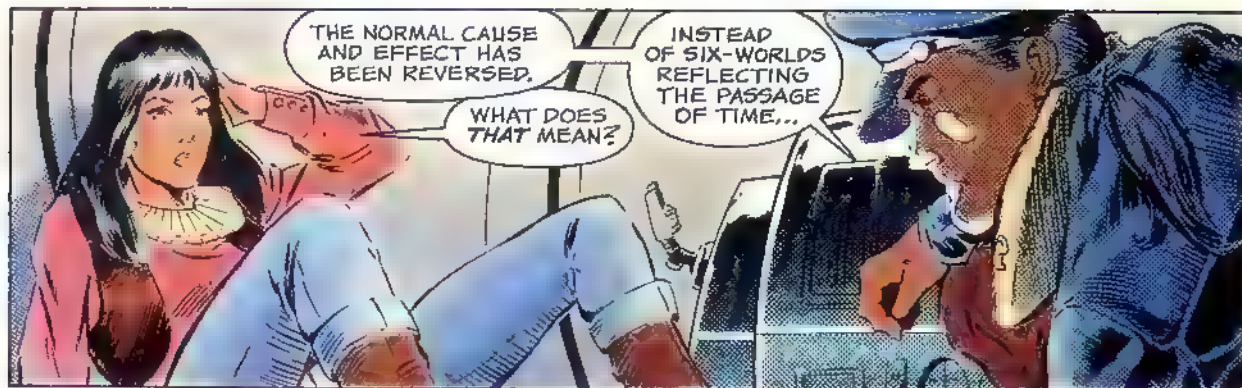
HEAD, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?



I'M DOING TIME-CHECKS.

NINE-CROC'S SIXTH WORLD IS BEING CREATED LONG BEFORE IT'S SUPPOSED TO... TIME MAY BE SPEEDING UP...







SCI-PLEX 3, HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS. THIS IS A SCIENTIFIC BASE KNOWN ONLY TO A VERY FEW.

ITS SECURITY HAS RECENTLY BEEN BREACHED...

SKY'S BEEN HURT. WE'VE GOT TO GET HIM HELP.

PERHAPS NOW YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME. WE MUST MAKE A DEAL WITH MISERY.

IT IS TIME YOU BELIEVED ME.

BELIEVE? NEVER! COOPERATE--MAYBE.

PERHAPS I NEED TO PROVE MY SINCERITY. BRING YOUR FRIEND TO ME... I CAN HELP HIM ABOARD MY AIRTOMB.

LIKE HELL, SKULL-FACE.

SKY'S PASSED OUT... WHAT DO I DO?

YOU ARE ALL NEEDED IN MEXICO. I WILL TEND TO WOLF'S NEEDS.

I CAN'T...

IN THIS STRUGGLE WE ARE ALLIES. DAMMIT-- I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

NEIN! NEIN! YOU CAN'T LET HIM GO ABOARD THE AIR TOMB.

I WAS TRAPPED THERE FOR DECADES! I KNOW--

STUPID CHILDREN. GO TO MEXICO.

I WILL STAY WITH HIM.

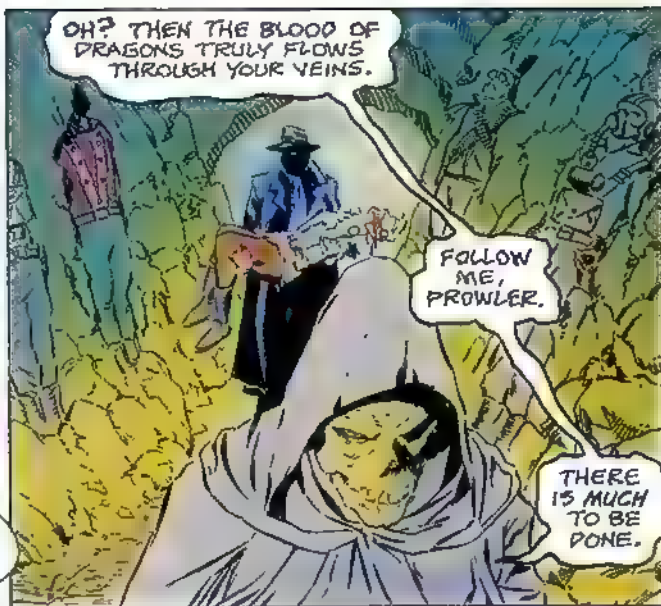
NOW-- HURRY!





I'VE LONG ADMIRERD YOU, PROWLER. YOU ARE A MAN OF WISDOM.

NO, I JUST DON'T FEAR YOU... ...WHICH MEANS YOU HOLD NO POWER OVER ME.



OH? THEN THE BLOOD OF DRAGONS TRULY FLOWS THROUGH YOUR VEINS.

FOLLOW ME, PROWLER.

THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE.



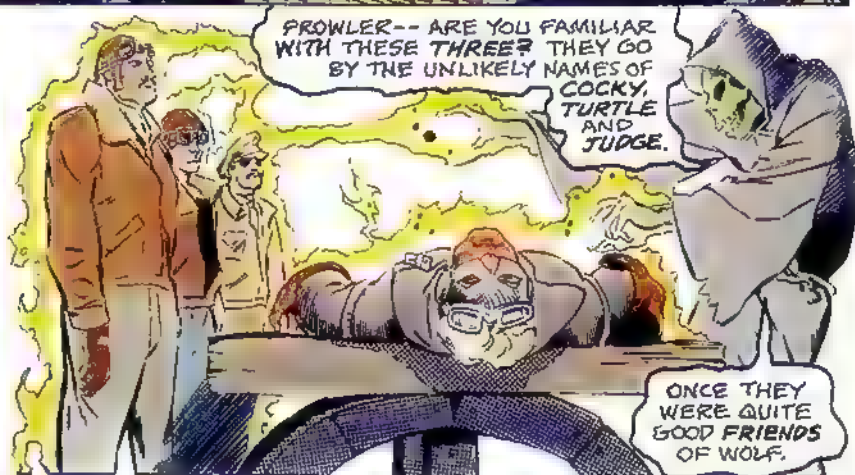
I DO NOT WISH TO KNOW HOW MANY HELPLESS SOULS YOU HAVE IMPRISONED HERE.

THEN KEEP OUR LITTLE SECRET TO YOURSELF, EH?



THERE, PLACE HIM UPON THE TABLE.

THEN STAND BACK WHILE I DO THE REST.



PROWLER-- ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THESE THREE? THEY GO BY THE UNLIKELY NAMES OF COCKY, TURTLE AND JUDGE.

ONCE THEY WERE QUITE GOOD FRIENDS OF WOLF.



I MAY REGRET THIS TO THE END OF TIME, BUT HE NEED NEVER LEARN THAT I HELPED HIS THREE OLDEST COMRADES RETURN HIM TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING.

NO, PERHAPS IT'S BEST WOLF NEVER KNOWS WHAT TRANSPIRED HERE.



OR YOUNG NELSON WHAT WAS SEEN.



NOW, ALLOW HIM TO REST WHILE I GATHER TOGETHER MORE HELP.

OUR STRUGGLE BEGINS IN EARNEST.



ELSEWHERE...

IT'S SO DARK, MY FRIEND. WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

gibberish!

gibberish!

UHM, ACEY-- TRUST ME WHEN I SAY I **HAVEN'T** TAKEN ANYTHING STRONGER THAN CAFFEINE--

JUST MOMENTS AGO AT MIDDAY, BEANISH, ARTIST, CREATOR OF THE FABULOUS LOOK-SEE SHOW, STEPPED INSIDE HIS SECRET SKETCH AND TRAVELED TO MEET HIS SECRET FRIEND, DREAMISHNESS...

BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED, ALL WAS NOT AS ALWAYS...

--IN WHICH CASE, MAYBE I ANGERED THE GOD OF THE COFFEE BEAN.

TOO PALE FOR COFFEE, BRIDGET--MORE LIKE LIMA. HEAD, WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU TAKEN US?

NOT PERU. OTHER THAN THAT, I DON'T KNOW.

THE TIME STREAM SEEMS TO BE BLEEDING EVERY WHICH-WHEN.

MY FRIEND, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU.

gibberish!

I THINK HE'S TALKING TO US, ACEY.

DID YOU KNOW BEANS COULD TALK?

I HADN'T GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT. HEAD, ANY WAY OUT OF HERE?

UNLIKELY AS IT MAY SEEM, THE BEAN MAY KNOW SOMETHING THAT COULD HELP US.

AT WORST, TALKING TO HIM IS AN AMUSING **DIVERSION** FROM AN OTHERWISE CATAclySMIC WAY TO SPEND YOUR AFTERNOON.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

WELL, SINCE YOU ARE TALKING, I GUESS YOU ARE REAL.

LOOK, LITTLE GUY, THERE'S BEEN SOME KIND OF COSMIC SCREW-UP...AND I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS, BUT IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOUR FRIEND'S PROBLEM.

WE'RE GOING TO TRY AND FIX IT, AND I GUESS YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO COME ALONG IF YOU WANT.

YOU MEAN I MIGHT BE ABLE TO RE-KINDLE HER INNER LIGHT IF I GO ALONG WITH YOU? ALL RIGHT. I'LL DO IT FOR HER.

gibberish!

gibberish!

I SURE HOPE I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING.

\*NOTE: SEE TALES OF THE BEANWORLD #10 --FRED





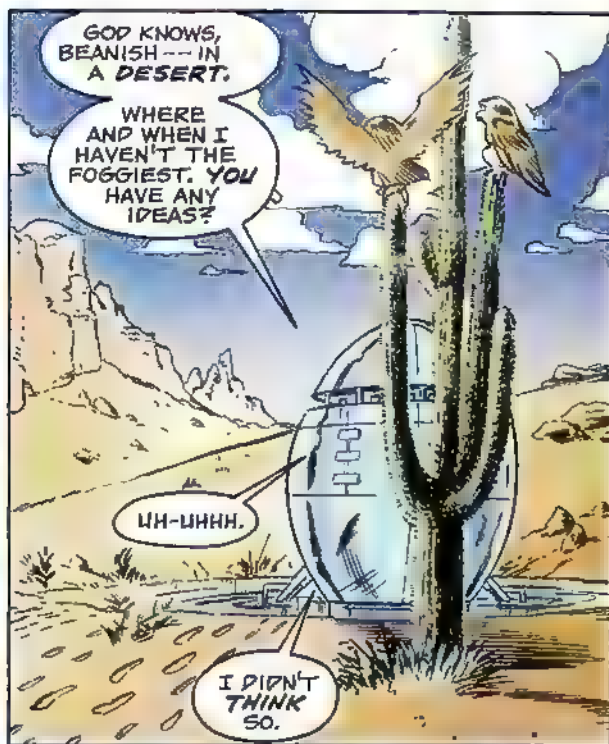
WE'RE OFF--  
AND OUT OF  
CONTROL  
AGAIN.

I'M SURE  
WE'LL FIGURE  
IT OUT, OR  
SOMETHING.

HI, I'M  
BRIDGET.  
YOU HAVE  
A NAME?

BACK  
HOME, THEY  
CALL ME  
BEANISH.

SO...  
WHERE  
AM I?



GOD KNOWS,  
BEANISH--- IN  
A DESERT.

WHERE  
AND WHEN I  
HAVEN'T THE  
FOGGIEST. YOU  
HAVE ANY  
IDEAS?

UH-UHHH.

I DIDN'T  
THINK  
SO.



WE COULD  
SEARCH AROUND  
FOR HELP, BUT I DON'T  
KNOW IF ANYONE  
LIVES HERE.

ACEY, I CAN'T  
KEEP CARRYING  
HIM AROUND...  
ASSUMING HE'S A  
HIM. LEND A  
POCKET?

OH?  
SURE... HAND  
HIM OVER.



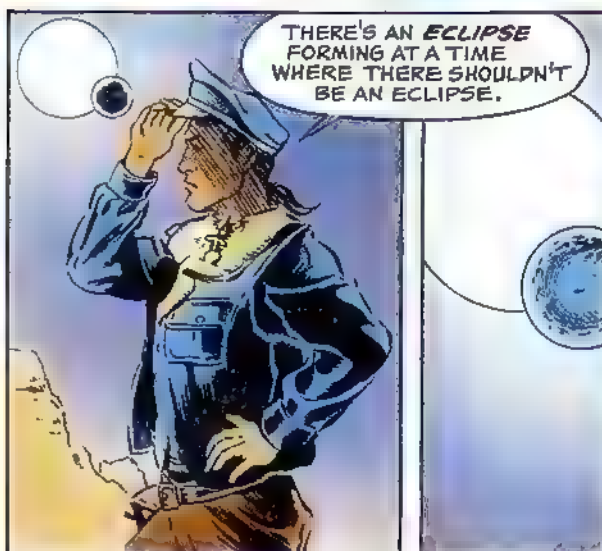
SO WHAT DO  
WE DO NOW?

DREAMISHNESS ASKED  
IF I'D HELP HER TO  
BECOME SOMETHING MORE,  
MAYBE THIS IS HOW I DO IT.



WE TRY TO  
FIGURE OUT  
HOW TO REGAIN  
CONTROL OVER  
THE A.C.F.

AND  
WHAT WE  
CAN DO  
TO STOP  
NINE-  
CROC.



THERE'S AN ECLIPSE  
FORMING AT A TIME  
WHERE THERE SHOULDN'T  
BE AN ECLIPSE.



I'M AFRAID WE'RE  
IN FOR A DOXIE-SLITCH  
NOT EVEN THE SCRAM-  
BACK CAN MAKE  
RIGHT.



CALIFORNIA...

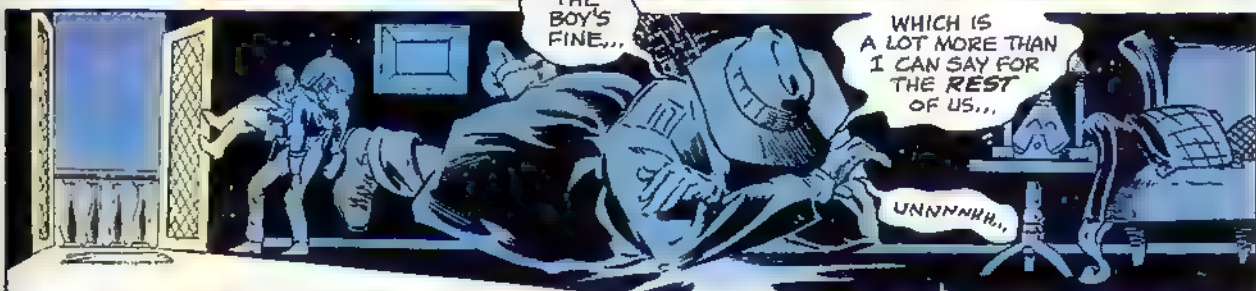
ARE YOU HIROTA? I'VE GOT A PACKAGE FOR YOU. SPECIAL DELIVERY...

WOLF? HURRY-- BRING HIM INSIDE. HE NEEDS HELP.



H-HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE.

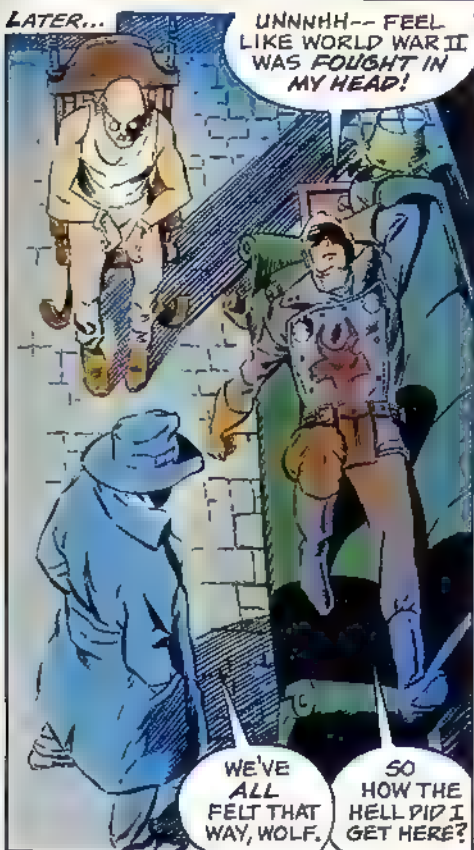
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? WHERE IS DAVY?



THE BOY'S FINE...

WHICH IS A LOT MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR THE REST OF US...

UNNNHHH...



LATER...

UNNNHH-- FEEL LIKE WORLD WAR II WAS FOUGHT IN MY HEAD!

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT, SKYWOLF.

WHAT DYA MEAN? I REMEMBER--

I SAID IT ISN'T IMPORTANT, SKYWOLF.

OH, YEAH... MEBBE IT AIN'T.

SO WHAT NOW?

WE NEED TO GO TO MEXICO... ARE THERE OTHERS WE CAN RECRUIT TO HELP US?

LIMMM, YEAH-- IF LA LUPINA'S STILL CHUGGING ENCHILADAS, WE CAN CALL ON HER.

OTHER THAN THAT THOUGH-- WE'RE ON OUR OWN.

HMMM... I SEE WE HAVE GUESTS.

WHY DID YOU NOT INFORM ME, HIROTA?

WE'VE ALL FELT THAT WAY, WOLF.

SO HOW THE HELL DID I GET HERE?



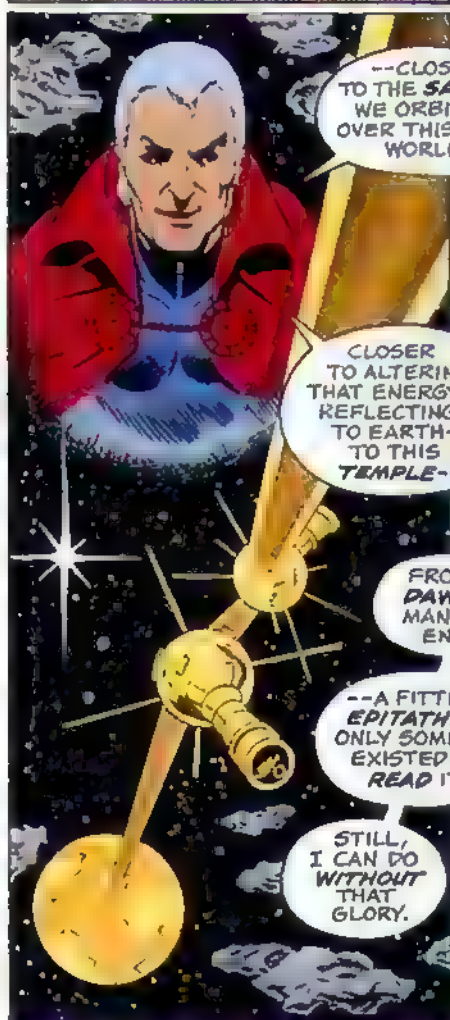
UNCOVER THE LENS... THE TIME IS NOW!



WITH EACH MOMENT, THE ENERGY FROM THE DARK ECLIPSE MOVES CLOSER TO EARTH--



--CLOSER TO THE SATELLITE WE ORBITTED OVER THIS DOOMED WORLD.

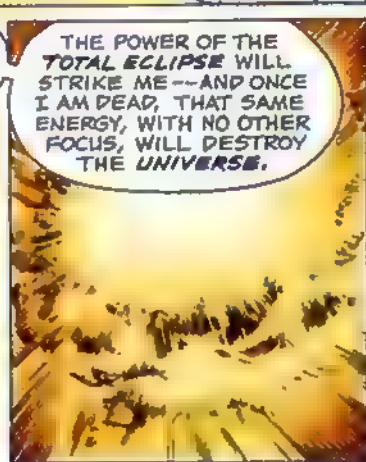


CLOSER TO ALTERING THAT ENERGY AND REFLECTING IT TO EARTH-- TO THIS TEMPLE--

--TO THE LENS WE HAD GROUND TO PRECISION.



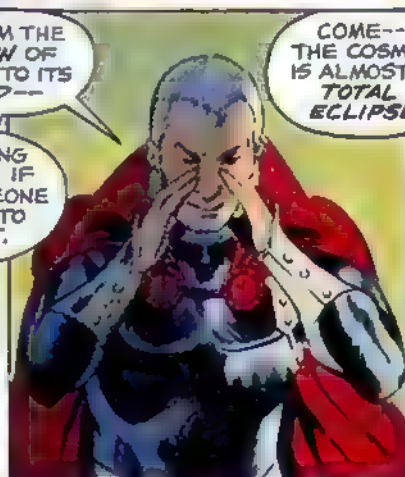
THE POWER OF THE TOTAL ECLIPSE WILL STRIKE ME--AND ONCE I AM DEAD, THAT SAME ENERGY, WITH NO OTHER FOCUS, WILL DESTROY THE UNIVERSE.



FROM THE DAWN OF MAN TO ITS END--

--A FITTING EPITAPH, IF ONLY SOMEONE EXISTED TO READ IT.

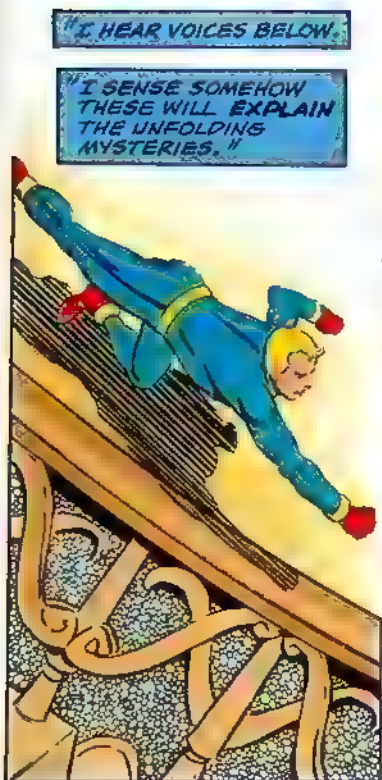
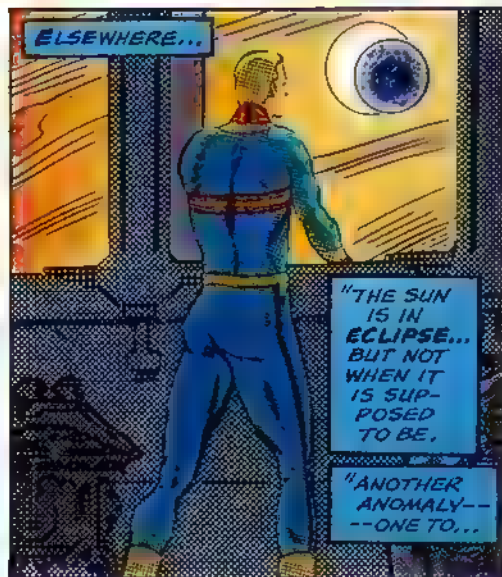
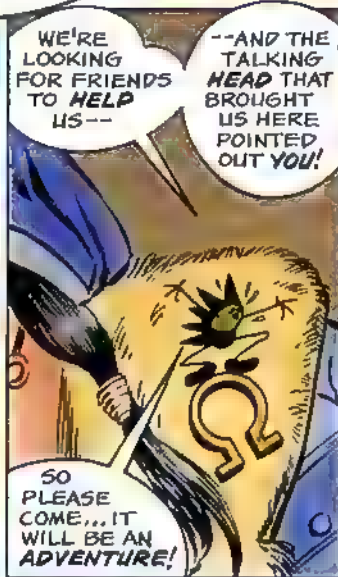
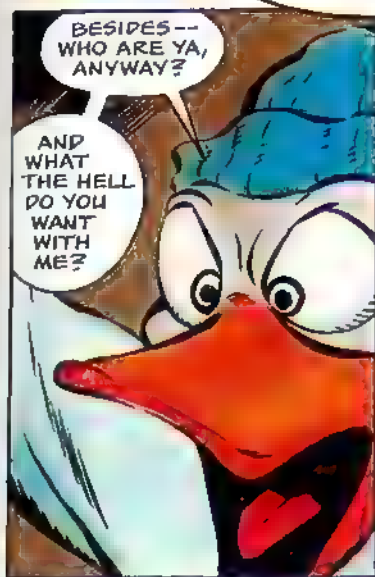
STILL, I CAN DO WITHOUT THAT GLORY.



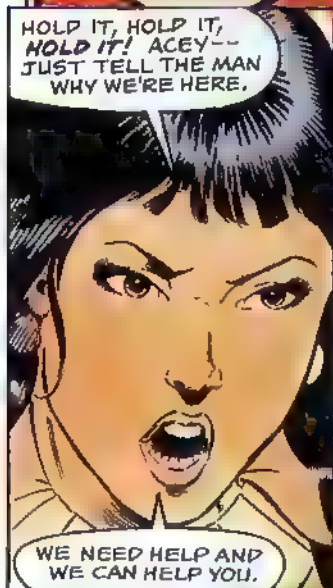
COME-- THE COSMOS IS ALMOST IN TOTAL ECLIPSE.













ELSEWHERE...

OKAY, PAL--  
REACH INTO THAT  
DRAWER NICE 'N'  
EASY--

--AND TAKE OUT ALL  
THE PAPER... THE ONE  
WITH THE **PRESIDENTS'**  
FACES ON 'EM.

BUT LEAVE  
THE **BOTTOM**  
BILL, EH?

WE WOULDN'T  
WANT YOU TRIPPING  
THE **SPECIAL BANK**  
ALARM NOW,  
WOULD WE?

**KRASH!!**

WHAT  
THE  
HELL?

WHO THE  
HELL ARE  
YOU?

THEY  
CALL ME  
**THE BLACK  
TERROR.**

I DON'T THINK  
YOU'D LIKE FINDING  
OUT WHY. GIVE BACK  
THE **MONEY**  
AND **STEP**  
**FREE.**

WE NEED  
YOU.

WHO TH--?  
GET BACK,  
PAL--  
OR YOU  
AND YOUR  
FRIENDS ARE  
**COOKED.**

WE'RE  
**NOT**  
WITH  
THEM...

ALTHOUGH I CAN EASILY  
UNDERSTAND *WHY* YOU  
WOULD THINK THAT.

BUT LET  
ME ASSURE  
YOU...

**AGGHH--**  
MY HAND! H-HE  
BROKE MY WRIST!!

I-- I DON'T GET IT. WHAT'S  
GOING ON HERE?

PAL, WHAT  
SAY WE GO OUTSIDE  
AND MY FRIEND  
WITH THE OVER-  
ACTIVE MUSCLES  
AND I WILL  
**EXPLAIN** IT  
TO YOU...

...WITHOUT  
USING  
FORCE.



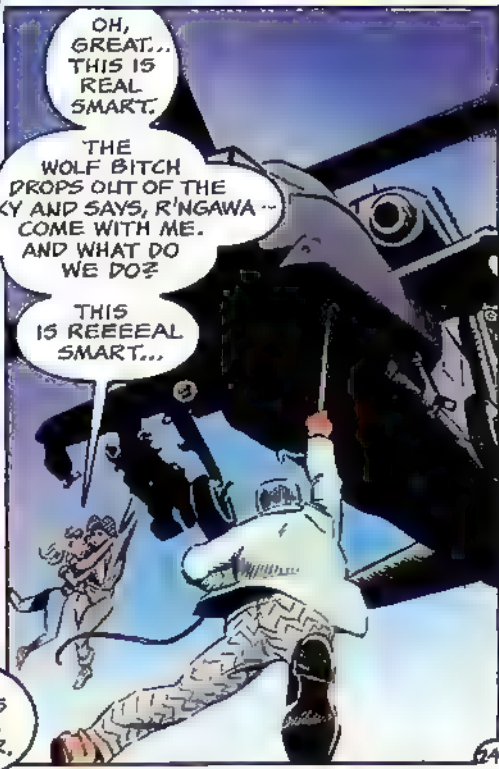


THE MEXICAN DESERT GROWS COLD  
AS THE SUN BECOMES A GOLDEN  
SLIVER AT HIGH NOON.

THE SHAKEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
CREW AT TEZHUACATPLAN  
HAS HEADED HOME. THE  
LIBERTY PROJECT DOES  
LIKEWISE.



NOTE: SEE THE SBRAPHIM  
OBJECTIVE #1 FOR DETAILS  
--FRED





IN THE HOME  
OF THE MASKED  
MAN...

BARN! IT'S  
GETTING DARK  
OUTSIDE-- AND  
IT'S ONLY THREE  
O'CLOCK!

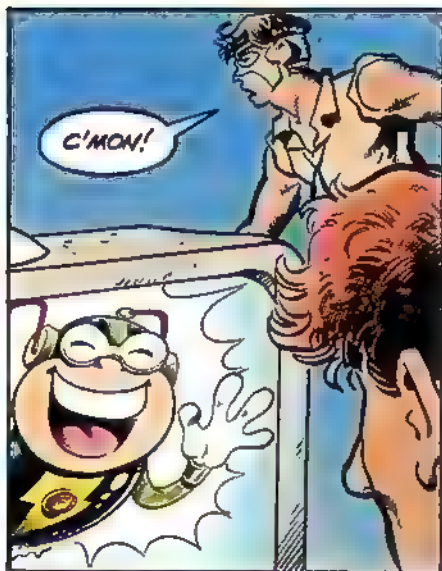
I KNOW,  
DICK! JUST IN  
TIME FOR RADIO  
BOY!

BUT, BARN--  
THIS MUST BE AN  
ECLIPSE!

IMPOSSIBLE.  
THERE'S NOT  
SUPPOSED TO BE  
AN ECLIPSE UNTIL  
NOVEMBER.

THEN  
SOMETHING'S  
UP! LET'S  
GO!

NOW?!  
BUT I  
HAVEN'T  
SEEN THIS  
EPISODE!



MEANWHILE...

BUMMER, MO!  
IT'S THREE O'CLOCK,  
AND IT'S PITCH  
BLACK OUT!

BUT, MAX--  
HOW WILL WE  
GET A TAN?!

THE CALIFORNIA GIRLS' SWIM-  
SUITS DESIGNED BY CASEY  
ROBBINS, SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

ONLY MS. TREE DOESN'T  
SEEM TO NOTICE.

BUT THEN, HER WORLD  
IS ALWAYS DARK.





AND NOW WE GO ELSEWHERE... TO ANOTHER PLACE, ANOTHER LAND, ONE WITH THINGS AND CREATURES, AND THE BEING WHO BATTLES THEM WITH HIS LAST BREATH...

THE WORLD HAS GONE MAD, BUT I AM HERE TO RIGHT WRONGS. TO CORRECT UNCERTAINTY. TO BOLDLY BATTLE WHAT NO MAN HAS BATTLED BEFORE!

...THIS IS THE LAND OF DOC STEARN-- MR. MONSTER!

NO MATTER HOW MANY CARS-- SOME ACTUALLY MADE IN THE U.S.O.F.A.-- TURN INTO NEFARIOUS CREATURES FROM HELLSPAWN, MR. MONSTER SHALL DEFEAT THEM OR DIE TRYING.

BEEP-BE-BE-BE-BEEP!

WHAT? THE 1957 THUNDERBIRD COMPLETE WITH OUT-MODED FINS SEEMS TO ESCAPE ME...

...BUT NOTHING...NOTHING, CAN EVER ESCAPE THE VIGILANT VIGILANCE OF MR. MONSTER, MONSTER DESTROYER.

EEE-RONK!

LOOK-- THERE, HE MUST BE THE ONE WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

NO! IT SEEMS TO TOSS ME OFF, A NIGHT-MARISH BUCKING BRONCO. AND I THOUGHT THIS WAS A THUNDERBIRD, NOT A MUSTANG!

DIE, YOU CURSED CAR. YOU ATROCIOUS AUTO. DIE! DIE! DIE!

DO I HEAR THE DEATH RATTLE OF AUTO-POSSESSING DEMONS? DO I SEE THE OIL-SOAKED BLOOD-STAINS INDICATING MY LATEST SUCCESS?

OOOOOPS!

MY MONSTER TRANSMOGRIFICATOR!

SCREEEEEEEE!





HEAD,  
WE'RE RUN-  
NING OUT OF  
TIME.

YOU  
THINK I  
DON'T KNOW  
THAT?

BUT  
WE'RE HERE  
FOR A  
REASON.

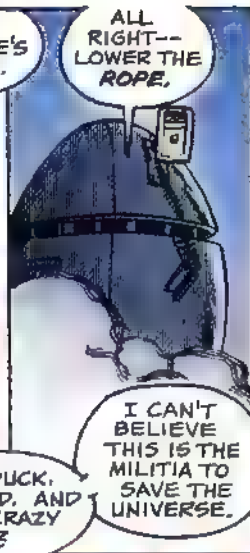


I KNOW, I KNOW,  
TO GET HELP.

AND  
SO FAR  
WE'VE  
GOTTEN  
A BEAN...

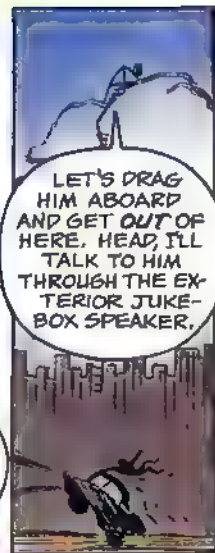
I LIKE  
HIM. HE'S  
CUTE.

AND A DUCK,  
AND A GOD, AND  
NOW A CRAZY  
MAN?

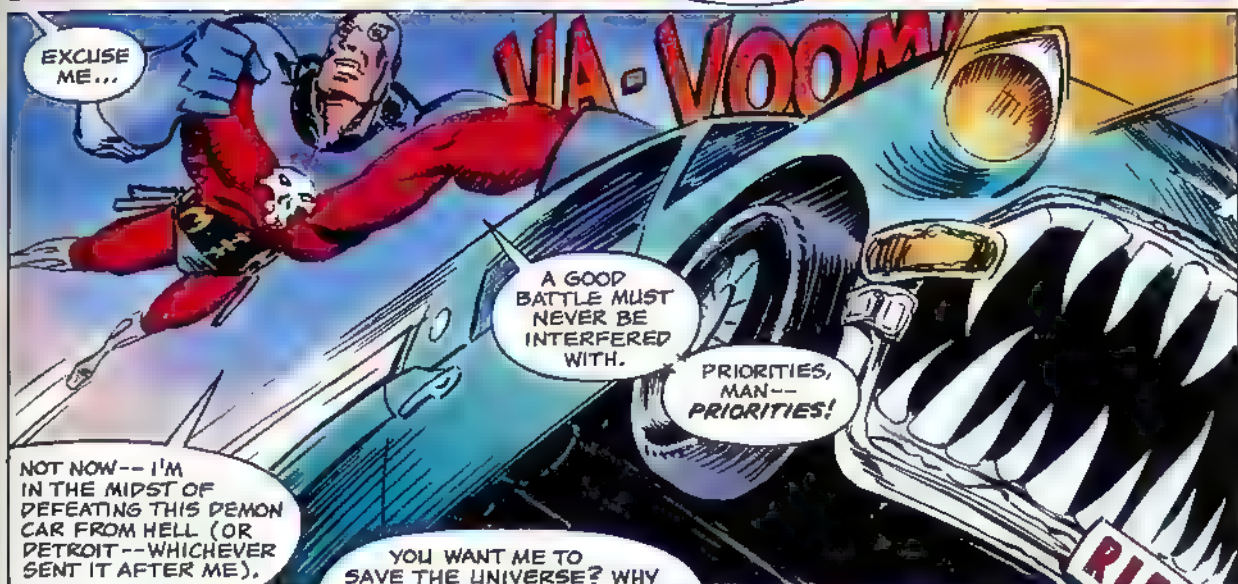


ALL  
RIGHT--  
LOWER THE  
ROPE.

I CAN'T  
BELIEVE  
THIS IS THE  
MILITIA TO  
SAVE THE  
UNIVERSE.



LET'S DRAG  
HIM ABOARD  
AND GET OUT OF  
HERE. HEAD, I'LL  
TALK TO HIM  
THROUGH THE EX-  
TERIOR JUKE-  
BOX SPEAKER.



EXCUSE  
ME...

A GOOD  
BATTLE MUST  
NEVER BE  
INTERFERED  
WITH.

PRIORITIES,  
MAN--  
PRIORITIES!

NOT NOW-- I'M  
IN THE MIDST OF  
DEFEATING THIS DEMON  
CAR FROM HELL (OR  
DETROIT--WHICHEVER  
SENT IT AFTER ME).

YOU WANT ME TO  
SAVE THE UNIVERSE? WHY  
DIDN'T YOU SAY SO? MR. MON-  
STER IS ALWAYS ALERT.  
ALWAYS VIGILANT.  
ALWAYS CHEAP!



IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T  
NOTICED, YOU'RE FIGHT-  
ING A TIME ANOMALY...  
WE NEED HELP IN PRE-  
VENTING THEM FROM  
DESTROYING THE  
UNIVERSE.

JUST HOLD  
ON WHILE I  
STRIP THIS  
CAR OF ITS  
VERY LIFE!

IT WILL  
TAKE BUT A  
MOMENT.

VARLET!  
TO THE  
DEATH!



ACE, WE  
HAVEN'T GOT  
TIME. WE MUST  
LEAVE NOW.

WAIT!  
WAIT!  
I JUST  
HAVE TO  
CONVERT IT  
TO PROTO-  
MATTER.

IT  
WON'T  
TAKE--



DAMN! YOU  
CAN'T SAVE  
THE UNIVERSE  
WITHOUT MR.  
MONSTER!

OH,  
WELL...  
PERHAPS  
THERE ARE  
OTHER  
MONSTERS  
TO FIGHT?

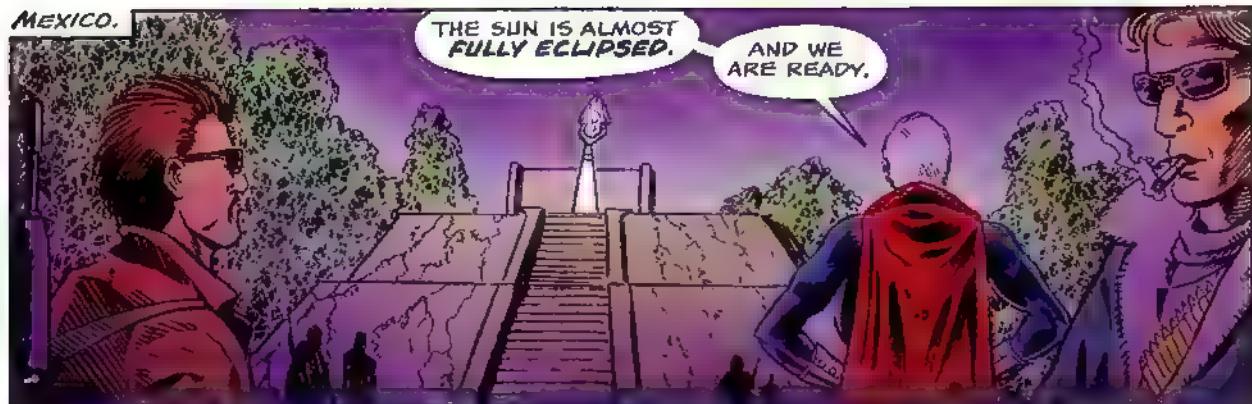
ONE  
CAN  
ALWAYS  
WISH!



MEXICO.

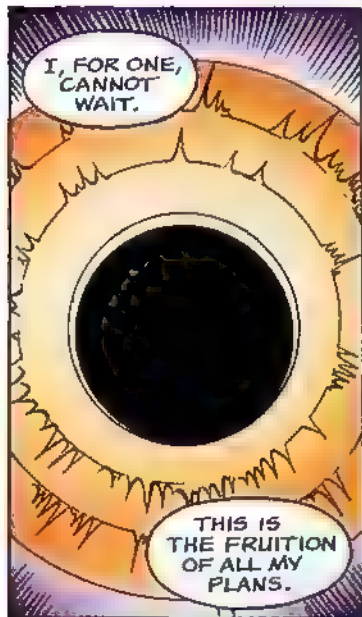
THE SUN IS ALMOST  
FULLY ECLIPSED.

AND WE  
ARE READY.



I, FOR ONE,  
CANNOT  
WAIT.

THIS IS  
THE FRUIT  
OF ALL MY  
PLANS.



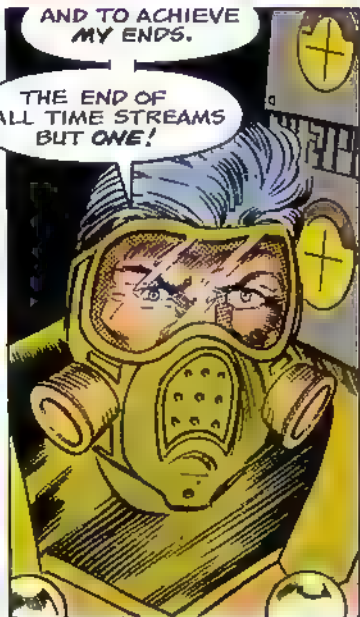
NOT  
YOUR  
PLANS,  
ZZED--  
MINE.

YOU'LL  
GET YOUR  
WISH. YOU  
WILL DIE--  
BUT IN MY  
FASHION.



AND TO ACHIEVE  
MY ENDS.

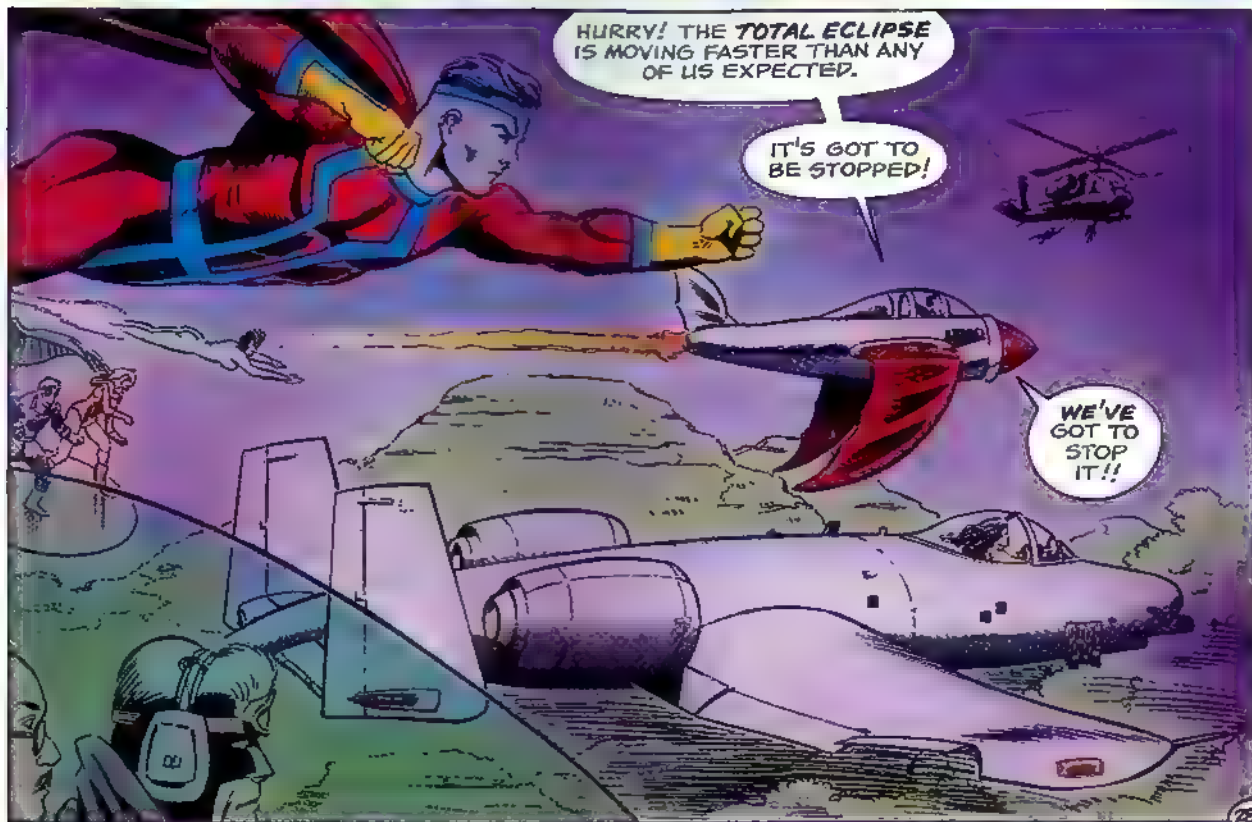
THE END OF  
ALL TIME STREAMS  
BUT ONE!



HURRY! THE **TOTAL ECLIPSE**  
IS MOVING FASTER THAN ANY  
OF US EXPECTED.

IT'S GOT TO  
BE STOPPED!

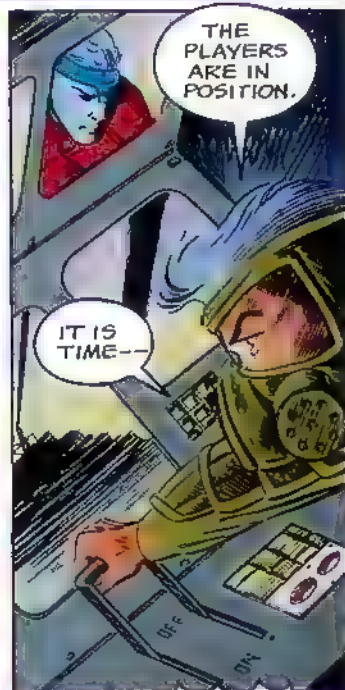
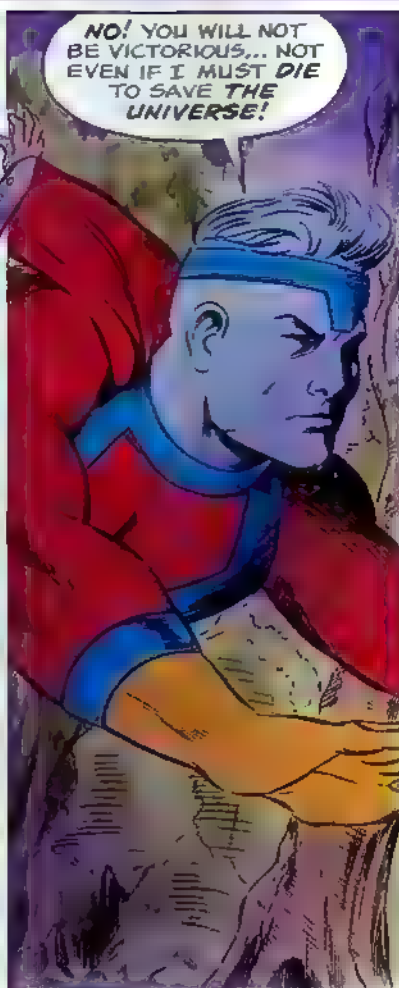
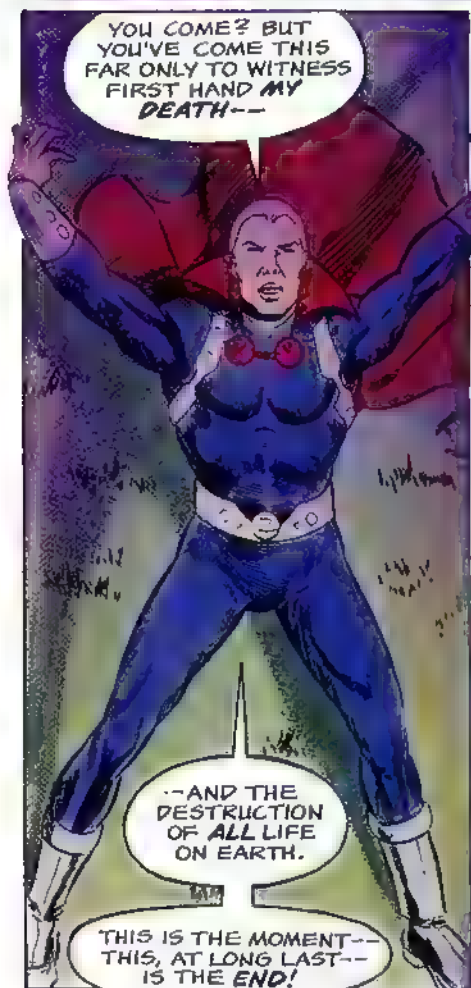
WE'VE  
GOT TO  
STOP  
IT!!



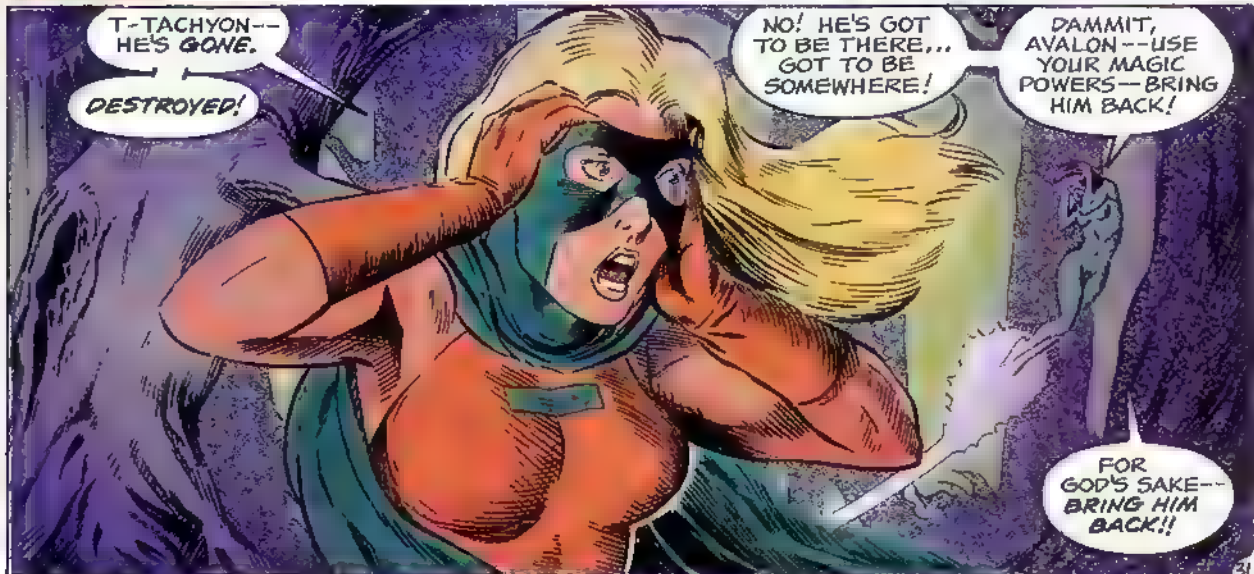
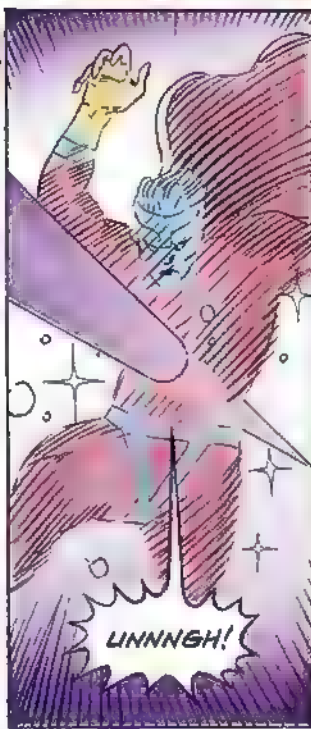




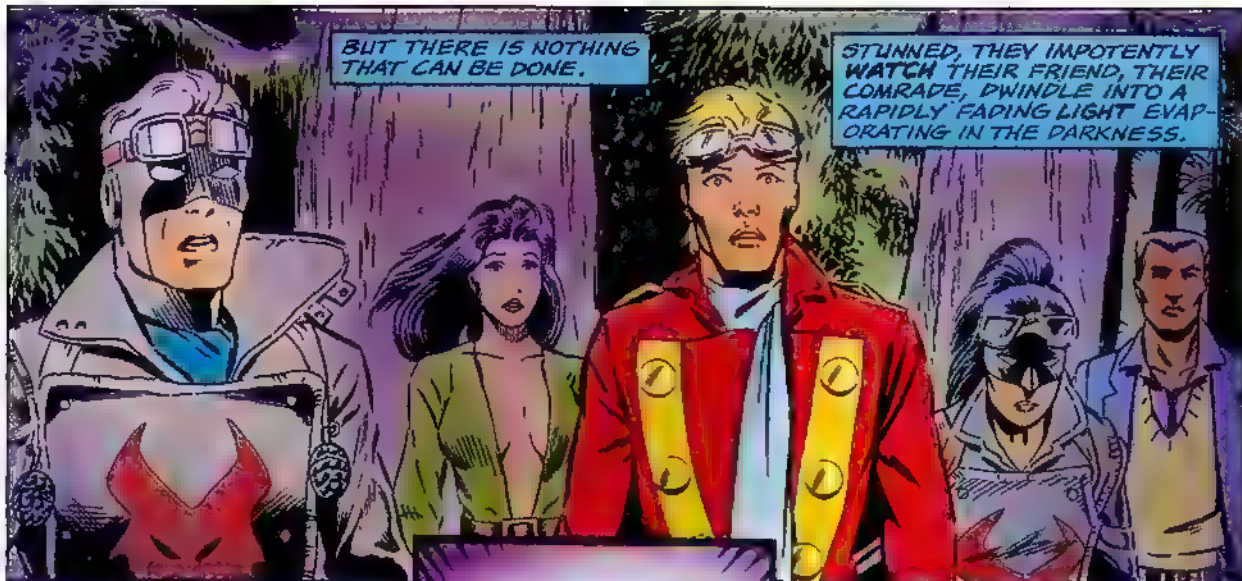












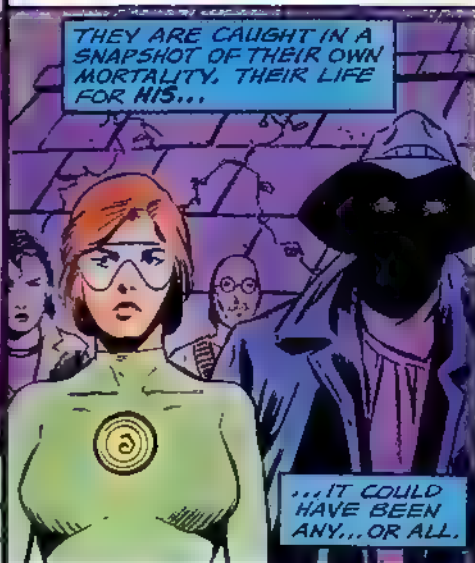
BUT THERE IS NOTHING  
THAT CAN BE DONE.

STUNNED, THEY IMPOTENTLY  
WATCH THEIR FRIEND, THEIR  
COMRADE, DWINDLE INTO A  
RAPIDLY FADING LIGHT EVAP-  
ORATING IN THE DARKNESS.



THEY HEAR HIS VOICE  
CALL TO THEM, THEN  
FADE BEHIND THE  
SCREAMS.

TACHYON IS GONE.



THEY ARE CAUGHT IN A  
SNAPSHOT OF THEIR OWN  
MORTALITY. THEIR LIFE  
FOR HIS...

...IT COULD  
HAVE BEEN  
ANY... OR ALL.

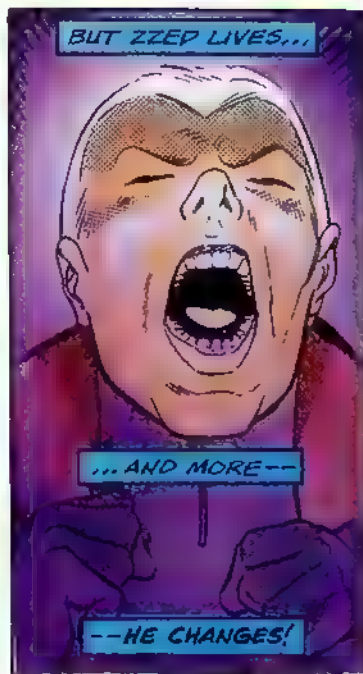
STUNNED, WEAKENED, STILL  
IN SHOCK, THEY BARELY HEAR  
THE SCREAMING BEHIND THEM.



YET IT GROWS WITH THUNDEROUS  
CACOPHONY. AND THEY TURN...



...TURN TOWARD  
THE PLAINTIVE  
WAILING. THE  
HORRIFIED PLEA  
FOR DISSOLUTION...  
THE AGONIZED  
CRY FOR FINAL,  
SILENT PEACE.



BUT ZZED LIVES...

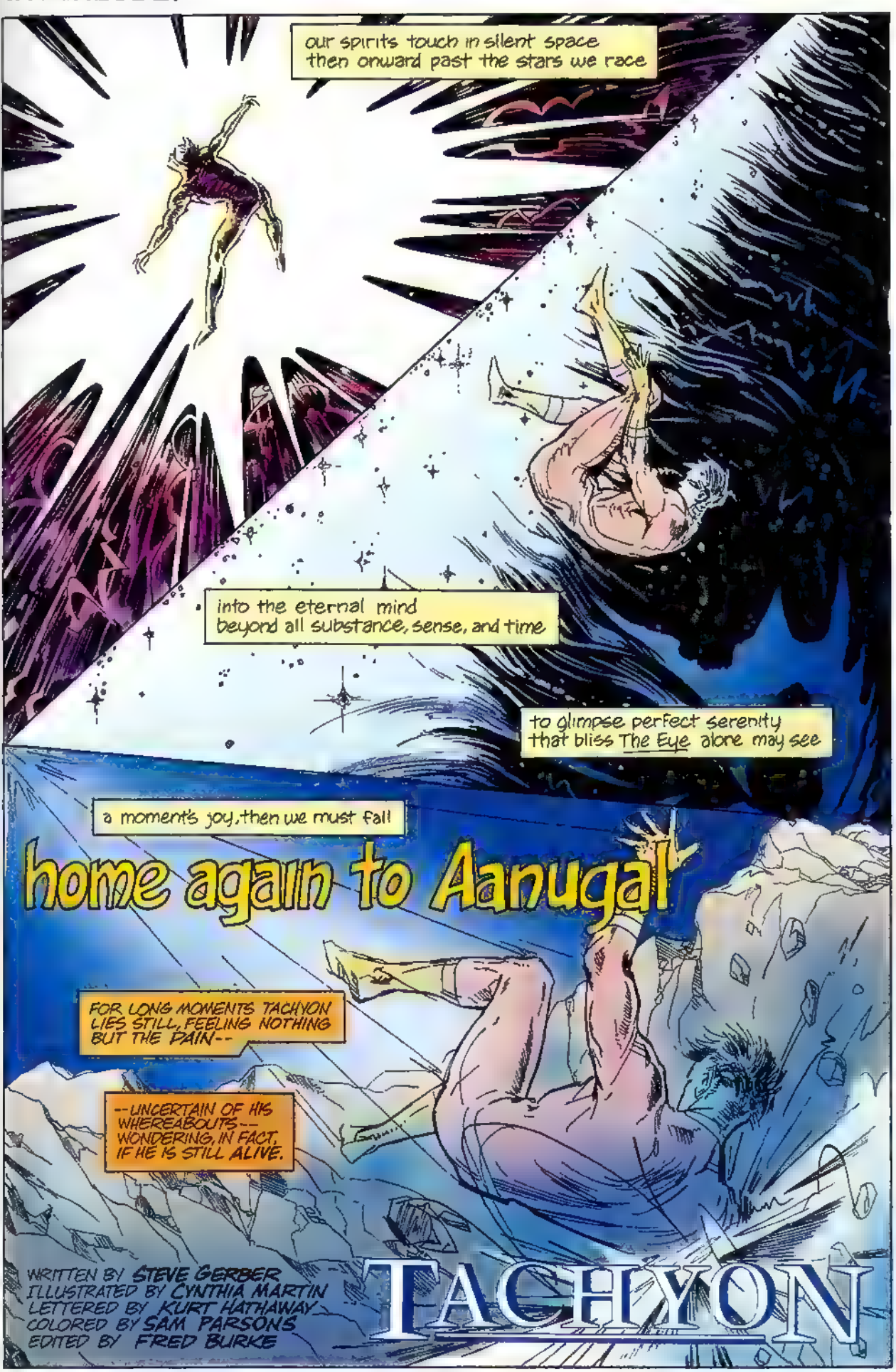
...AND MORE--

--HE CHANGES!

TO BE CONTINUED



## INTERLUDE:



our spirits touch in silent space  
then onward past the stars we race

into the eternal mind  
beyond all substance, sense, and time

to glimpse perfect serenity  
that bliss The Eye alone may see

a moment's joy, then we must fall

# home again to Aanugal

FOR LONG MOMENTS TACHYON  
LIES STILL, FEELING NOTHING  
BUT THE PAIN--

--UNCERTAIN OF HIS  
WHEREABOUTS--  
WONDERING, IN FACT,  
IF HE IS STILL ALIVE.

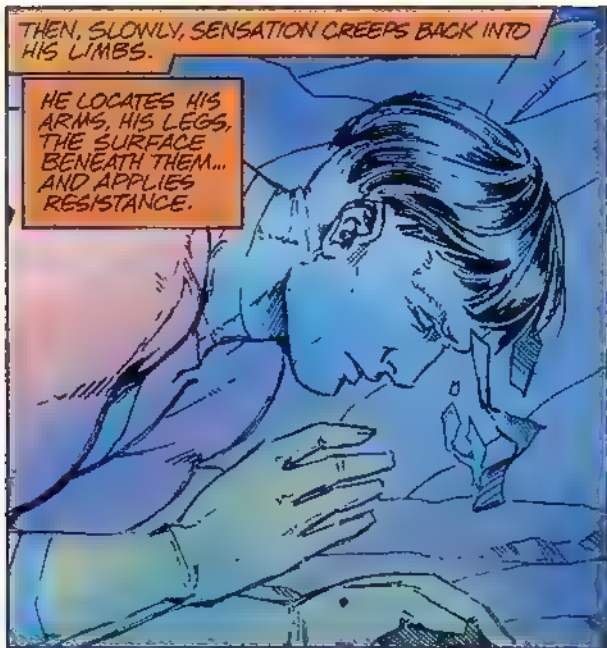
WRITTEN BY STEVE GERBER  
ILLUSTRATED BY CYNTHIA MARTIN  
LETTERED BY KURT HATHAWAY  
COLORED BY SAM PARSONS  
EDITED BY FRED BURKE

# TACHYON



THEN, SLOWLY, SENSATION CREEPS BACK INTO HIS LIMBS.

HE LOCATES HIS ARMS, HIS LEGS, THE SURFACE BENEATH THEM... AND APPLIES RESISTANCE.

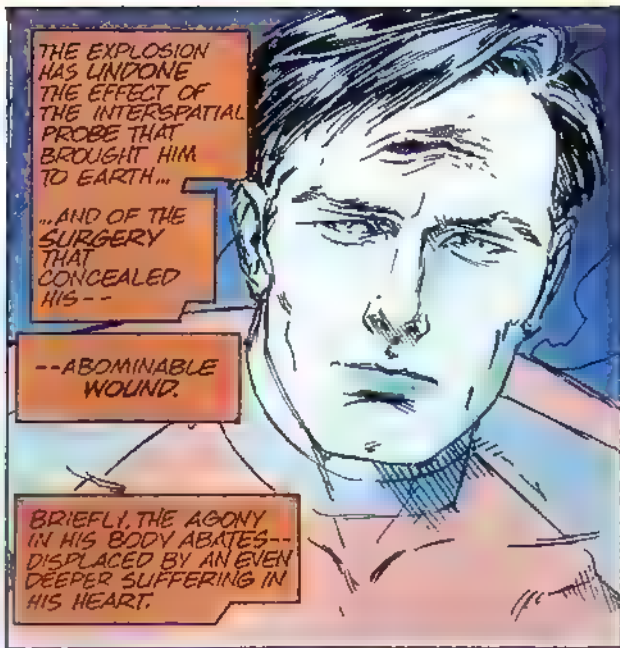


THE EXPLOSION HAS UNDONE THE EFFECT OF THE INTERSPATIAL PROBE THAT BROUGHT HIM TO EARTH...

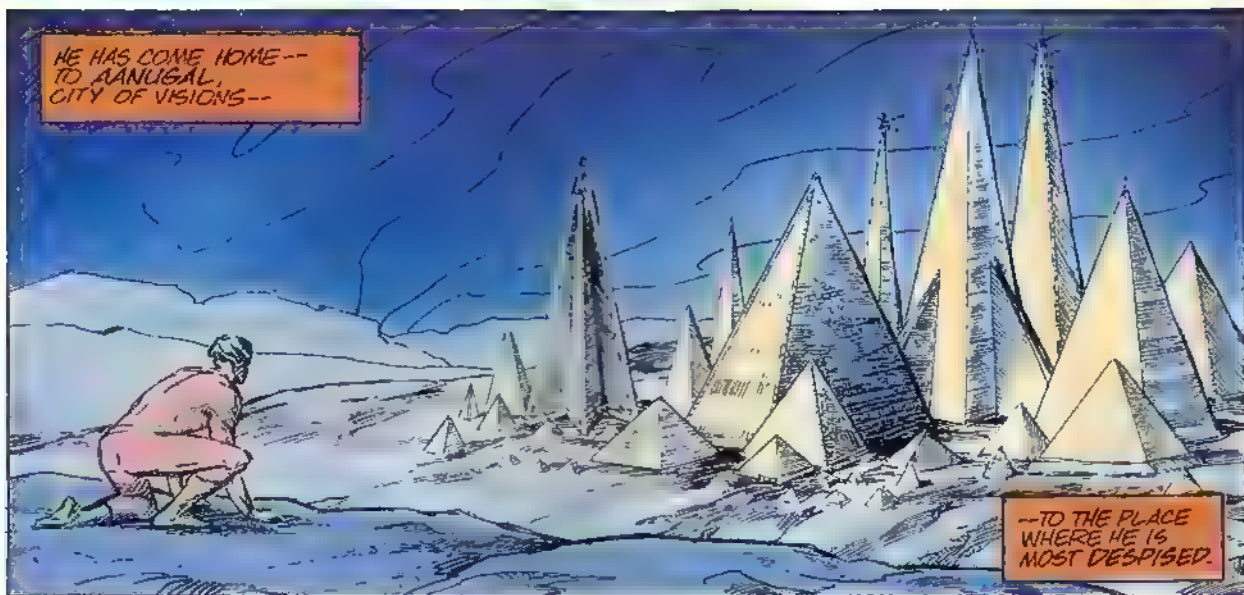
...AND OF THE SURGERY THAT CONCEALED HIS--

--ABOMINABLE WOUND.

BRIEFLY, THE AGONY IN HIS BODY ABATES-- DISPLACED BY AN EVEN DEEPER SUFFERING IN HIS HEART.

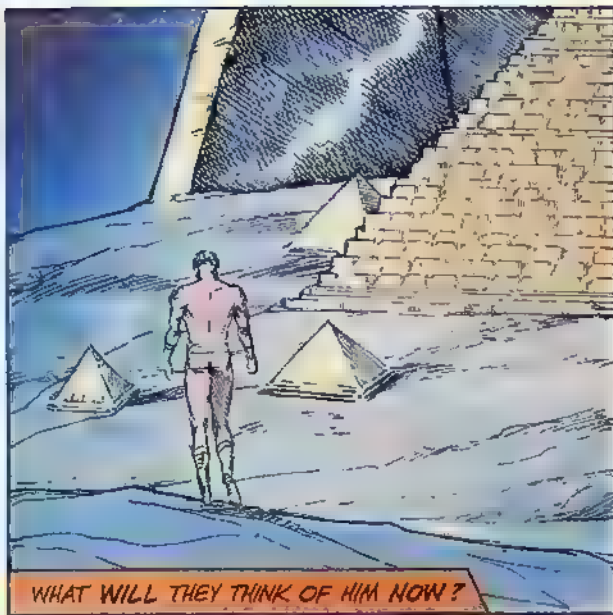
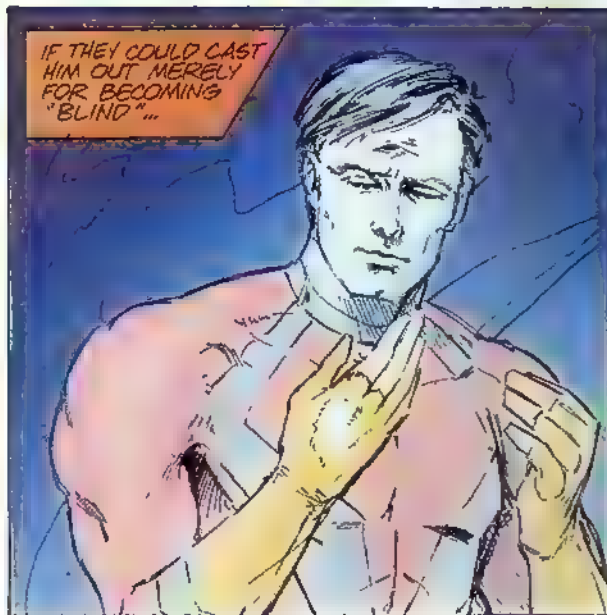


HE HAS COME HOME-- TO AANUGAL, CITY OF VISIONS--



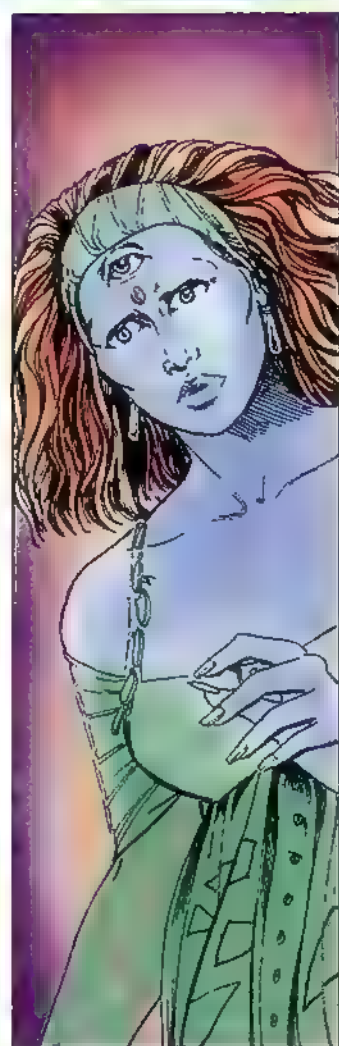
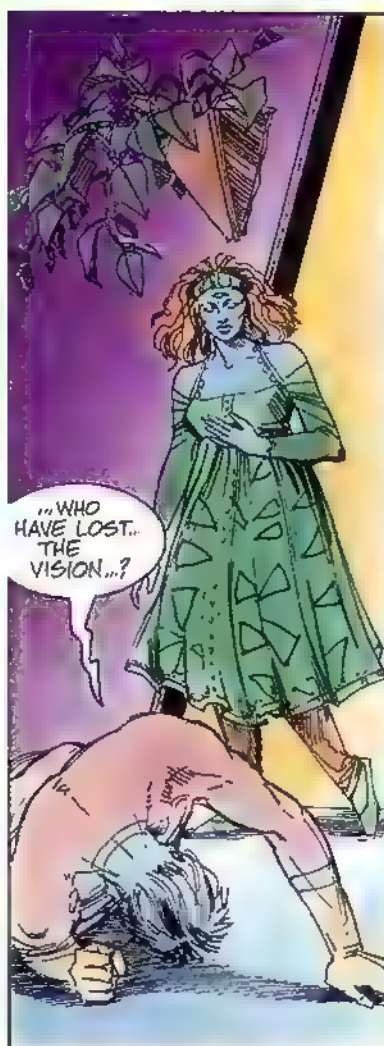
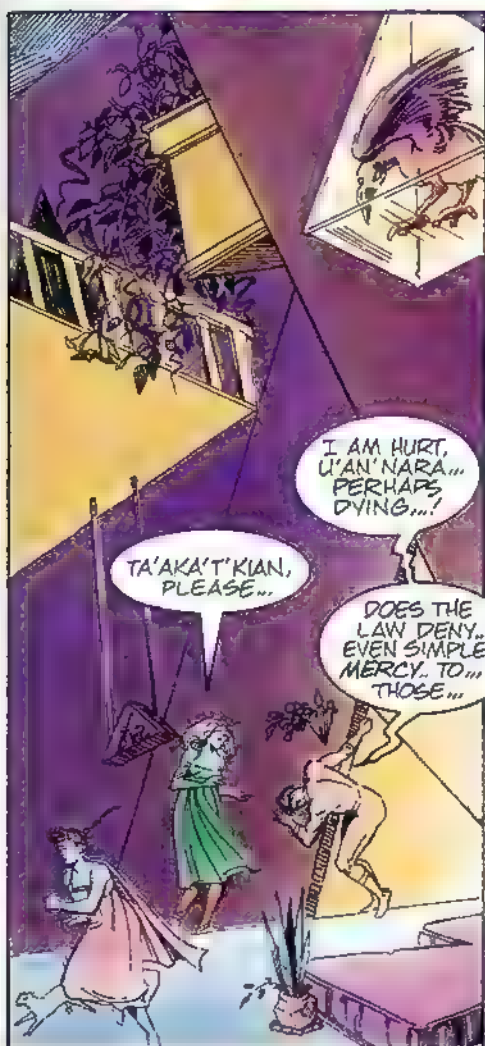
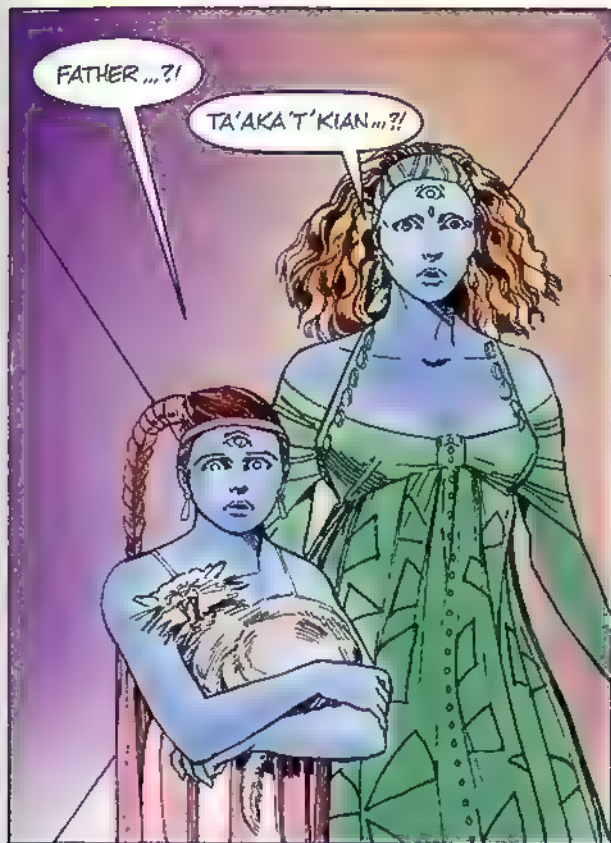
--TO THE PLACE WHERE HE IS MOST DESPISED.

IF THEY COULD CAST HIM OUT MERELY FOR BECOMING "BLIND"...

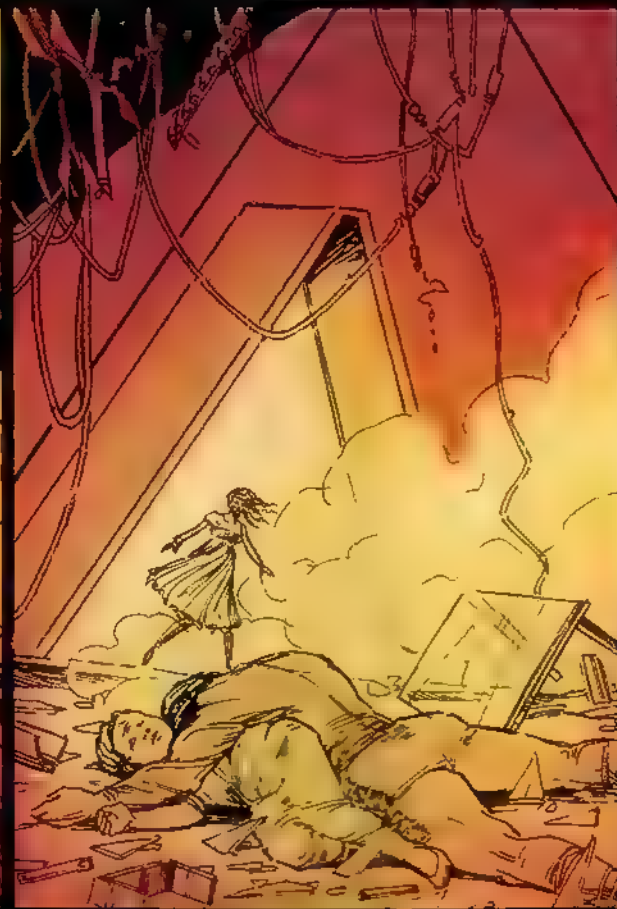


WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF HIM NOW?









IS SHE...  
ALIVE...?

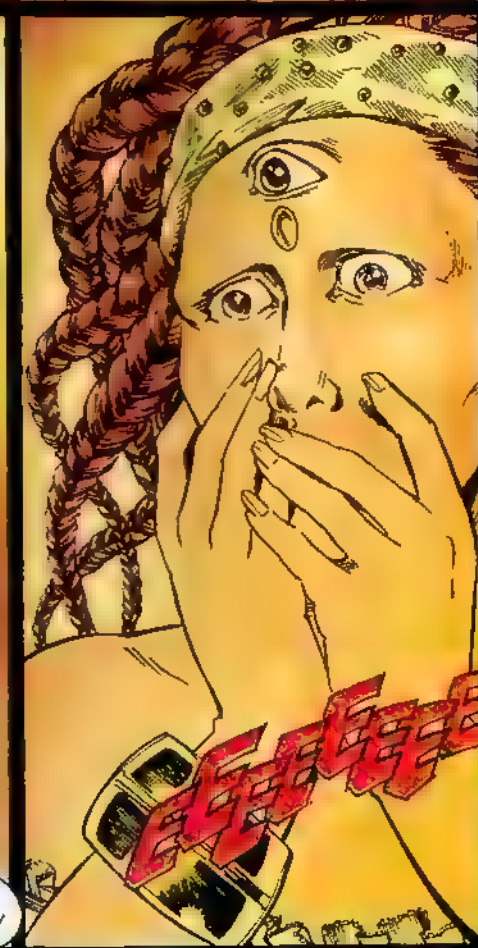
YES, YES...  
YOU SAVED  
HER, THANK  
SERENITY...

YOU  
CREDIT...  
THE WRONG  
PRINCIPLE...



THANK...  
SACRIFICE...

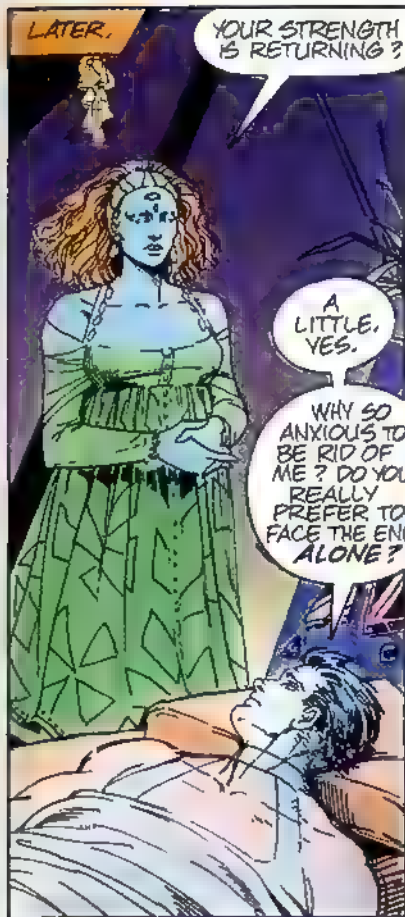
...FOR I SHALL  
NEVER KNOW  
SERENITY AGAIN...



WHY DID  
YOU COME  
BACK?

HAVE YOU  
NOT HURT US  
ENOUGH?



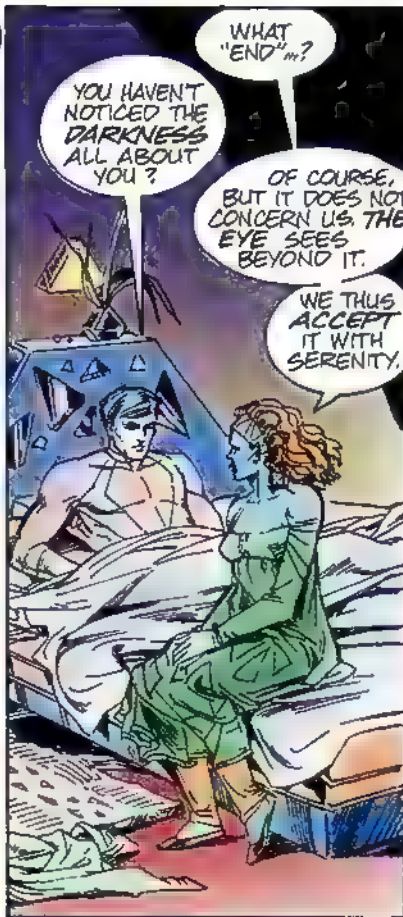


LATER.

YOUR STRENGTH IS RETURNING?

A LITTLE, YES.

WHY SO ANXIOUS TO BE RID OF ME? DO YOU REALLY PREFER TO FACE THE END ALONE?

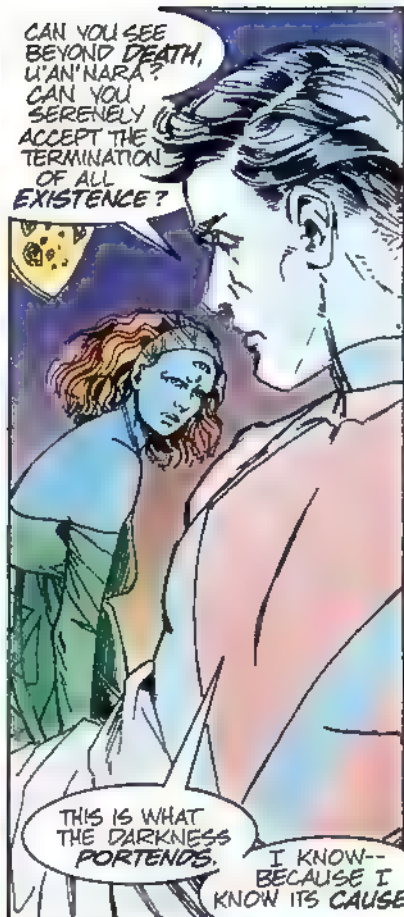


YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED THE DARKNESS ALL ABOUT YOU?

WHAT "END"??

OF COURSE, BUT IT DOES NOT CONCERN US. THE EYE SEES BEYOND IT.

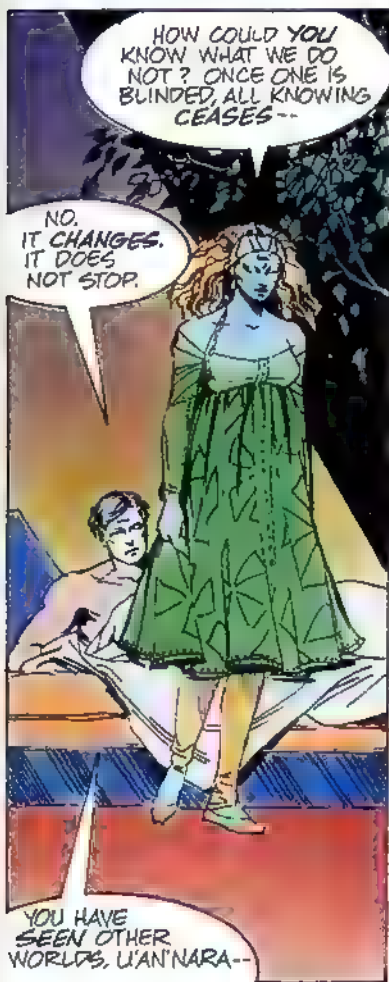
WE THUS ACCEPT IT WITH SERENITY.



CAN YOU SEE BEYOND DEATH, U'AN'NARA? CAN YOU SERENELY ACCEPT THE TERMINATION OF ALL EXISTENCE?

THIS IS WHAT THE DARKNESS PORTENDS.

I KNOW-- BECAUSE I KNOW ITS CAUSE.



HOW COULD YOU KNOW WHAT WE DO NOT? ONCE ONE IS BLINDED, ALL KNOWING CEASES--

NO, IT CHANGES. IT DOES NOT STOP.

YOU HAVE SEEN OTHER WORLDS, U'AN'NARA--



--BUT I HAVE LIVED ON ONE! I WAS SNATCHED FROM THE LAND OF THE BLIND--

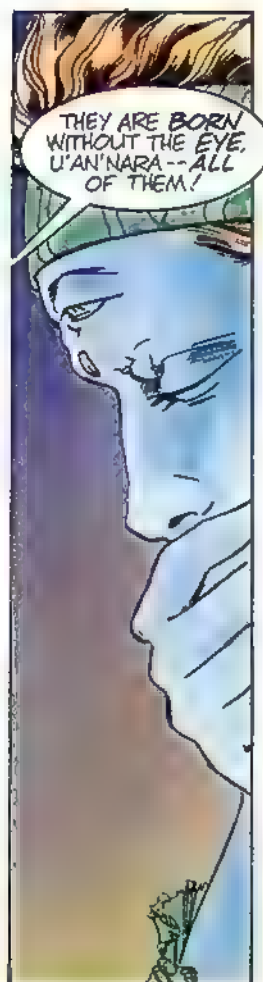
DO NOT TOUCH ME!!



--BY A FORCE FROM ANOTHER PLANE OF EXISTENCE, AND TRANSPORTED BODILY TO THAT UNIVERSE.

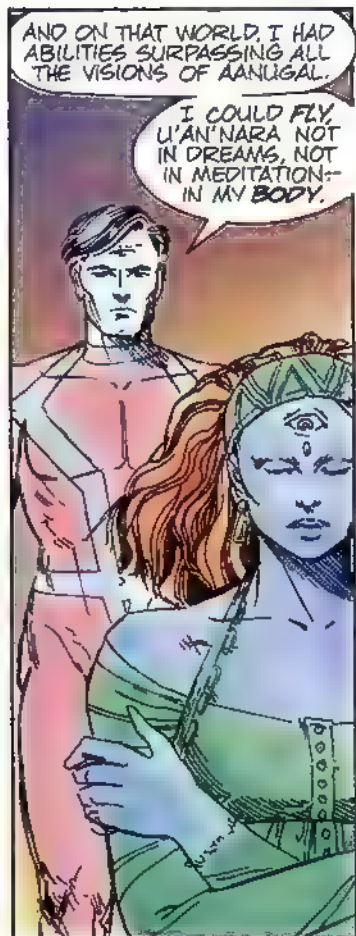
WHERE YOU TRAVEL WITH THE EYE, THE BEINGS OF THAT WORLD PROBE WITH THEIR SCIENCE.

PLEASE... SAY NO MORE.



THEY ARE BORN WITHOUT THE EYE, U'AN'NARA-- ALL OF THEM!





AND ON THAT WORLD, I HAD ABILITIES SURPASSING ALL THE VISIONS OF AANUGAL.

I COULD FLY, U'AN'NARA, NOT IN DREAMS, NOT IN MEDITATION-- IN MY BODY.



I HAD STRENGTH SUCH AS YOU CANNOT IMAGINE.

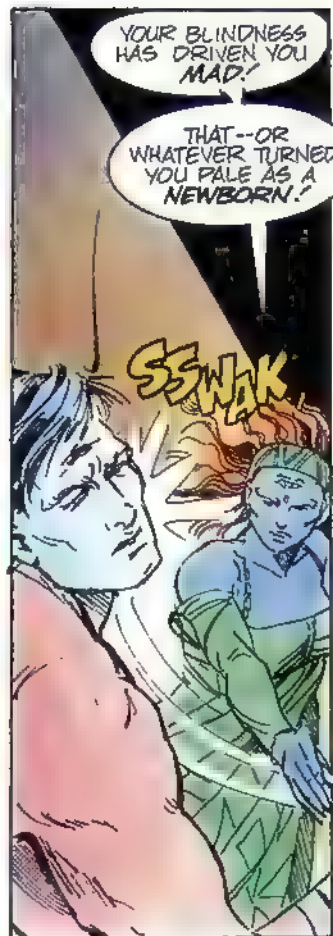
AND I LEARNED I COULD SURVIVE IN CONDITIONS OF TENSION--

STOP...



--THAT THE PASSIVE SERENITY OF THE EYE IS NOT THE ONLY IDEAL STATE OF BEING!

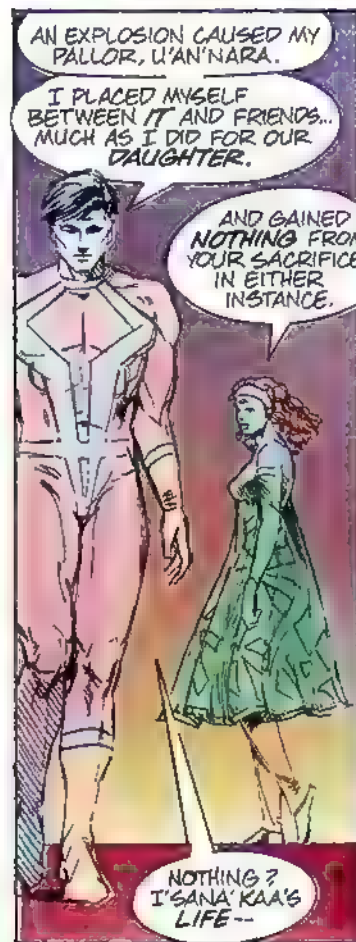
NO!



YOUR BLINDNESS HAS DRIVEN YOU MAD!

THAT--OR WHATEVER TURNED YOU PALE AS A NEWBORN..?

SSWAK

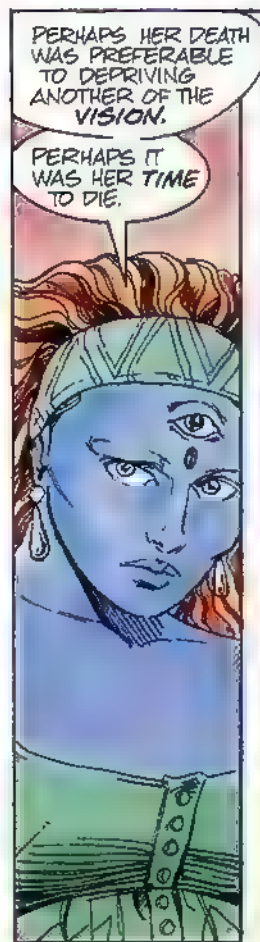


AN EXPLOSION CAUSED MY PALLOR, U'AN'NARA.

I PLACED MYSELF BETWEEN IT AND FRIENDS... MUCH AS I DID FOR OUR DAUGHTER.

AND GAINED NOTHING FROM YOUR SACRIFICE IN EITHER INSTANCE.

NOTHING? I'SANA'KAA'S LIFE--

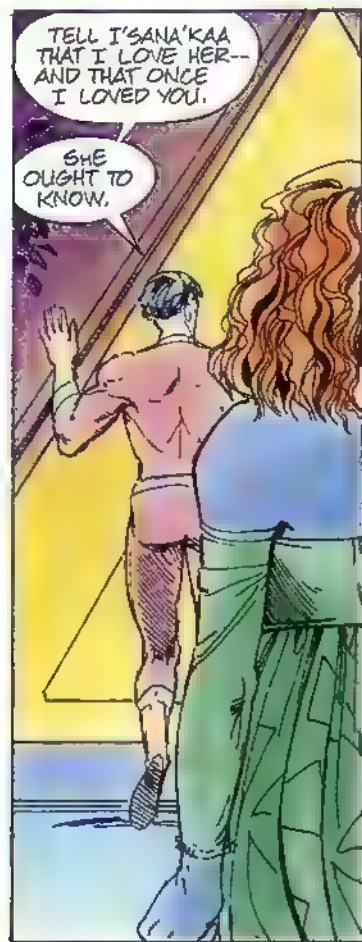


PERHAPS HER DEATH WAS PREFERABLE TO DEPRIVING ANOTHER OF THE VISION.

PERHAPS IT WAS HER TIME TO DIE.



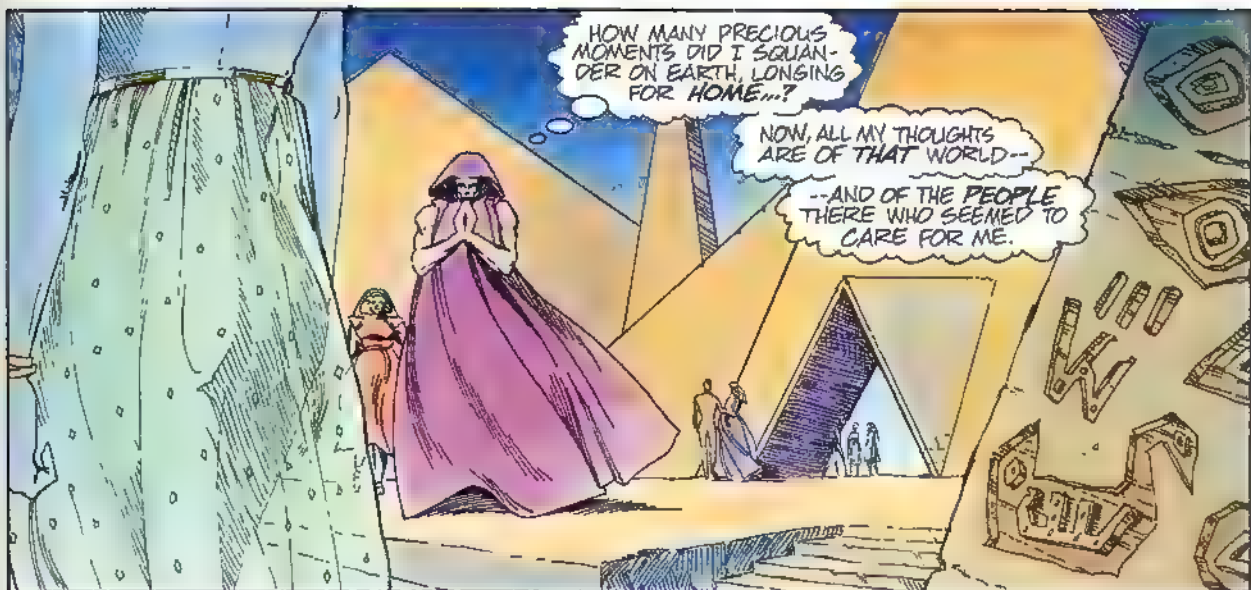
NO IT WAS NOT.



TELL I'SANA'KAA THAT I LOVE HER-- AND THAT ONCE I LOVED YOU.

SHE OUGHT TO KNOW.





HOW MANY PRECIOUS  
MOMENTS DID I SQUAN-  
DER ON EARTH, LONGING  
FOR HOME...?

NOW, ALL MY THOUGHTS  
ARE OF THAT WORLD--

--AND OF THE PEOPLE  
THERE WHO SEEMED TO  
CARE FOR ME.



I ONLY PRAY THAT  
THEY SURVIVE THIS  
CRISIS ZZED HAS  
THRUST UPON  
US...

...BECAUSE  
I WISH TO  
GO BACK.



U'AN'NARA WAS  
RIGHT IN ONE  
RESPECT.

I CANNOT  
LIVE OUT  
MY LIFE...



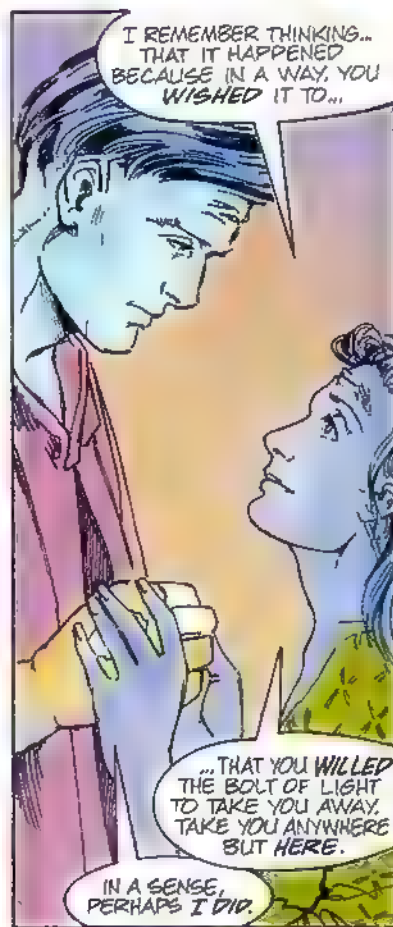
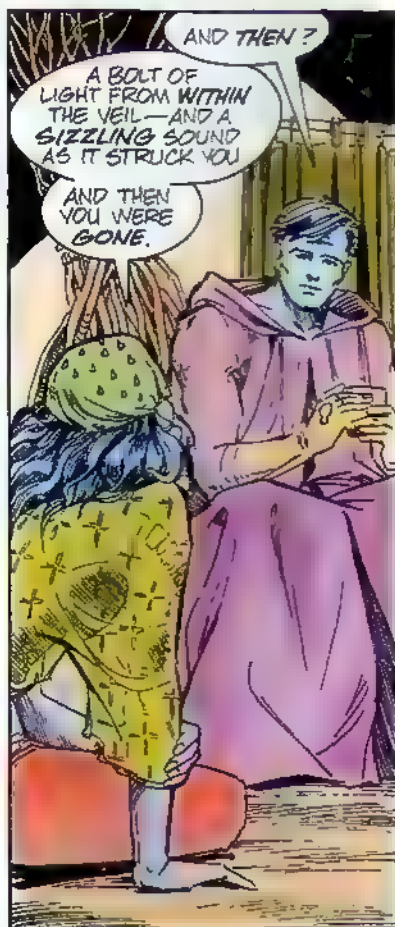
...IN THIS CITY  
OF THE BLIND.

CAN IT BE...  
T'AKA'T'KIAN...?!

YOU  
SAID HE  
DIED.

SAN HIM  
DISINTEGRATE.  
DIDN'T EXPECT  
HIM BACK.





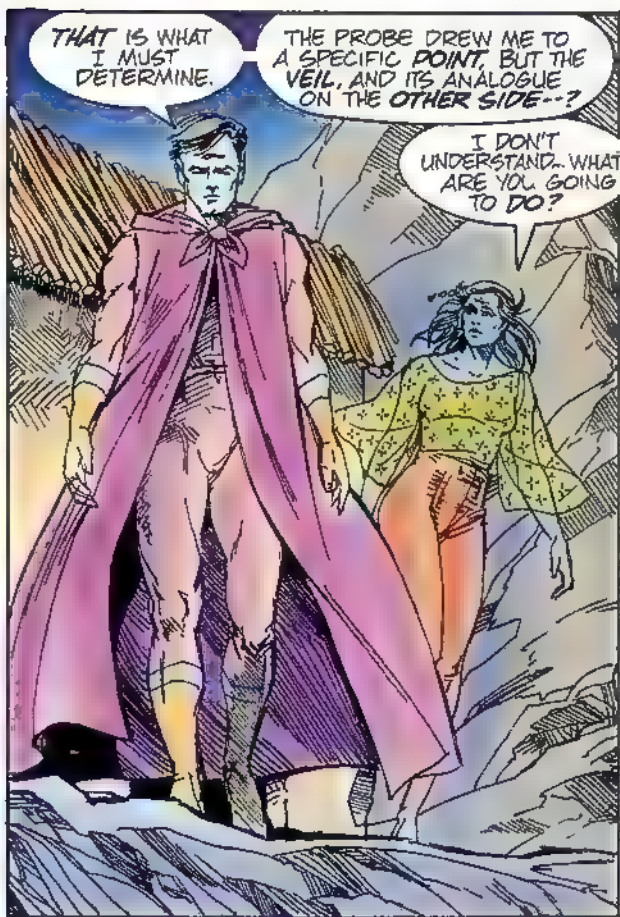




IT WAS A **PROBE** FROM ANOTHER WORLD. IT COULD HAVE SEIZED ANY OF US.

BECAUSE MY FIELD OF CONSCIOUSNESS WAS THE MOST **INTENSE** AT THAT MOMENT, IT LOCKED ON TO ME.

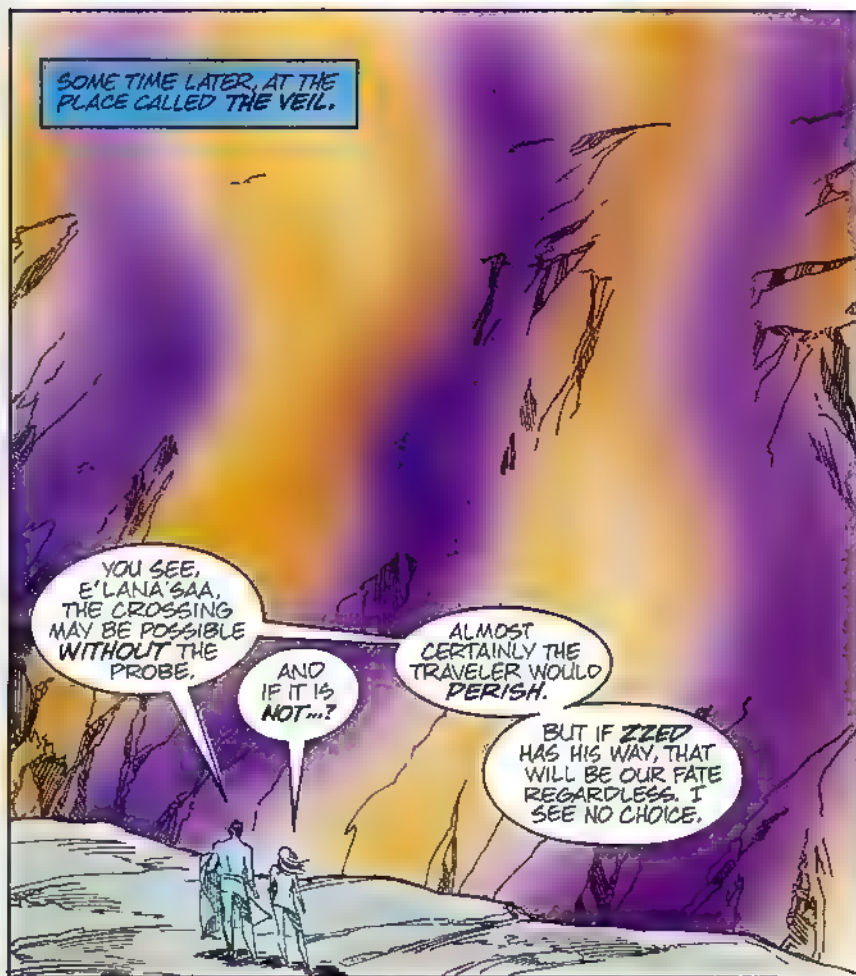
AND **TOOK** YOU TO THAT WORLD?



THAT IS WHAT I MUST **DETERMINE**.

THE **PROBE** DREW ME TO A SPECIFIC POINT, BUT THE **VEIL**, AND ITS ANALOGUE ON THE OTHER SIDE--?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO **DO**?



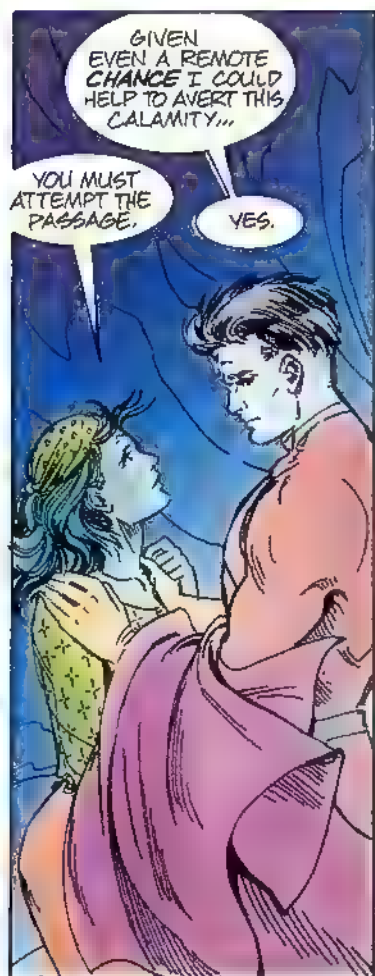
SOME TIME LATER, AT THE PLACE CALLED THE **VEIL**.

YOU SEE, E'LANA'SAA, THE **CROSSING** MAY BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE **PROBE**.

AND IF IT IS **NOT**...?

ALMOST CERTAINLY THE **TRAVELER** WOULD **PERISH**.

BUT IF **ZZED** HAS HIS WAY, THAT WILL BE OUR FATE REGARDLESS. I SEE NO **CHOICE**.

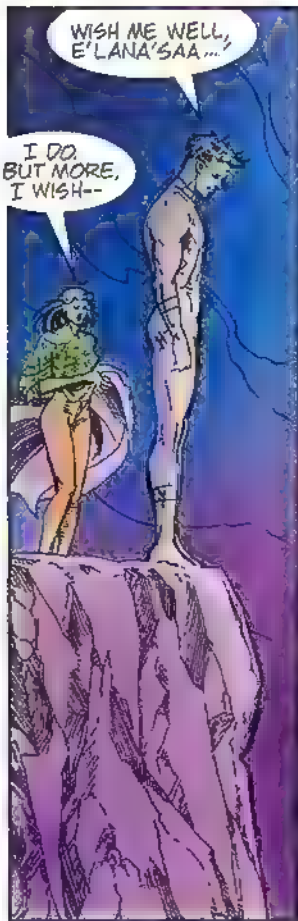


GIVEN EVEN A **REMOTE CHANCE** I COULD HELP TO **AVERT** THIS **CALAMITY**...

YOU MUST **ATTEMPT** THE **PASSAGE**.

**YES**.





**TO BE  
CONTINUED**

"IN A UNIVERSE-  
SPANNING THREE-  
PART MINI-SERIES  
THAT WILL CHANGE  
THE COURSE OF  
TACHYON'S  
EXISTENCE AND  
CHALLENGE  
YOUR EVERY  
ASSUMPTION  
ABOUT SUPERHERO  
COMICS--  
COMING SOON  
FROM ECLIPSE!"



# In Chicago Even Beans Do It!

Let's resume our trip through Eclipse history where we left off last issue.

In order to premiere the *Detectives, Inc.* graphic novel at the 1980 Chicago Comicon, Don and Marsha McGregor and I, with a couple of friends, left New York by car, stopped long enough in Pennsylvania to pick up a few boxes of advance copies from the printer, and hit I-80 for Chicago. Feeling appropriately tired after the sixteen hour drive, we caught only a portion of the required eight hours and the next morning were ready to take the city by storm with our new book.

Then, just as the doors were about to open, I looked at Don, he looked at me. Panic attack: "Would they like the book?" While we were confident that it was good, there's always that last minute doubt when you open the tightly sealed box and break out that first copy for the fans.

We had nothing to worry about. The first person who came up to the table shelled out his six bucks, got Don to autograph the book, and nodded appreciatively as he skimmed through the pages. We knew we had a hit. We actually ran out of copies long before the convention was over.

It was only about a year ago that I learned who the first buyer was on that early morning in Chicago. The guy who nodded so appreciatively was none other than the Head Bean himself, Larry Marder! Just think, if we had a *Total Eclipse* series ten years ago, Beanish might have suddenly appeared in the middle of a murder mystery involving lesbian midwives and private detectives in Manhattan!

At that Chicago Comicon, I also met Max Allan Collins, who had recently taken over writing *Dick Tracy*. Max's first two complete stories had gained him a legion of fans, among whom I was proud to be counted. For me, at least, he revitalized the strip.

At any rate, Max and artist Terry Beatty had produced a series of one-page "minute mysteries" featuring a private detective, Mike Mist. Max pitched the idea of a magazine collection of *Mike*



by Dean Mullaney



*Mist's Minute Mist-eries*, and it became the next project on the Eclipse schedule.

Around this time (late 1980), the growth of the comics specialty market accelerated. We felt that in *only* publishing graphic novels, we were shutting out the fertile area of short stories. After all, not every story needed 50 or 80 pages in which to be told. Similarly, not every artist had the time to produce an entire graphic novel.

Thus, *Eclipse Magazine* was born. I envisioned the magazine as an eclectic mix of continuing series, short pieces, serious adventure, and broad humor. I approached Max and Terry about creating a continuing character and they responded with the innovative detective series, *Ms. Tree*. It's a credit to both of them that eight years later, *Ms. Tree* is *still* being published, making it one of the most successful creator-owned series in modern comics history.

In many ways, *Eclipse Magazine* was a microcosm of what Eclipse would later become. Within the black-and-white pages of the first issue, we had Steve Englehart and Marshall Rogers' "Fozzie," a "heavy" death parable by Jim Starlin, a humorous look at death by Howard Cruse, a lovely silent fantasy by P. Craig Russell, a humor piece by Chris Browne and Thina Robbins, the aforementioned "Ms. Tree," and a cover painting by Paul Gulacy.

One criticism I've heard about Eclipse's output over the years has been that we're too eclectic. In reviewing the contents of that first issue, and looking at some of the varied items we're publishing today—a costumed adventure series (*Airboy*), a current events graphic album (*Brought to Light*), modern horror stories (Clive Barker's *Tapping the Vein*), Japanese comics (*Appleseed*), science fiction (Tim Truman's *Scout*), and others—I'm proud of the fact that we're eclectic. If I were to publish forty versions of the same concept month after month I'd...well, I'd

rather be picking apples.

If anyone ever wanted the status quo from us, they've been sorely disappointed.

The first art director for *Eclipse Magazine* was Rich Bruning, who now holds that position at DC. Rich and I were friends for many years and, with the advent of the new magazine, were anxious to work together. I remember the day we designed the contents page for the first issue. It was one of those incredibly frigid days in Madison, Wisconsin, where Rich then lived and worked. I was out on a visit from New York, and we agreed that it was more prudent to stay in the studio until that "brilliant" design appeared to us like the proverbial light bulb over our heads than to brave the winds coming off Lake Mendota.

I think Rich and I are perhaps the only two people who know how much of an influence we had on each other's design sense at the time. Rich, as you know, went on to edit the short-lived line of Capital Comics (including *Nexus*), and from there to his current position at DC. I've been in large part responsible for the design of Eclipse's comics (with lots of help from folks such as Cat, Scott McCloud, and Mack Fraga). This winter, when you find yourself preferring to stay out of the cold, pull out a bunch of Capital, Eclipse, and DC comics from their mylar snuggies. You might be amused to see how many ads and text pages contain similar elements. Rich's fascination with tilted black bars with white type in them have certainly found their way into Eclipse's comics, and my love for the three parallel lines design element introduced by Walter Dorwin Teague in the 1930s has crept into Rich's efforts.

*Eclipse Magazine* remains one of my favorites because of its diversity of material. The open ended editorial position allowed me to include work by "underground" cartoonists Hunt Emerson, Kaz, Rick Geary, and Larry Rippee, alongside "straight" cartoonists Marshall Rogers,





Mike Kaluta, and Steve Leialoha, sprinkled with a few then unknowns. A look through those issues will find among other things, the first published comics story by Kent Williams!

We also introduced some great continuing series, including "Ms. Tree," Englehart and Rogers' "Coyote," B.C. Boyer's "The Masked Man," and perhaps the finest thing we've ever published, Don McGregor and Gene Colan's "Ragamuffins."

1981 also brought Jim Starlin's *The Price* graphic novel into print. After watching Eclipse and other companies grow, Marvel Comics was playing creators' rights catch-up in 1981. They had recently introduced *Epic Illustrated* and were negotiating hard with Jim Starlin for a Starlin-owned graphic novel. That book involved the "Metamorphosis Odyssey" storyline Jim had started in *Epic* magazine. Jim wasn't happy with the new agreement proposed by Marvel/Epic.

Jim's a very clever fellow. He knew that he was negotiating not just for himself, but for every creator who was trying to squeeze a decent deal out of Marvel. He was blazing a contractual path for his peers at a company where creator ownership was not something management wanted to give.

And so Jim brought the next chapter in the "Metamorphosis Odyssey" saga to us, where he knew he could get the deal he wanted. It was by using our deal, and our contract, that Jim was later able to successfully leverage a fair contract from Marvel for himself and for all creators who've since received reasonable contracts from that company.

An odd thing about Marvel's choice of the name "Epic" for their creator-owned line of comics; If I had a nickel for every time someone has confused the "Epic" name with the "Eclipse" name, I'd have bought the MGM library, instead of it now residing with Ted Turner! More than one person has commented on the sug-

gestiveness of Marvel's name choice.

In late 1981, Steve Gerber decided to sue Marvel Comics over ownership of Howard the Duck. Legally, it was a complicated case, and I won't get into the details here, but lest you wonder what side we were on, Eclipse's first color comic, *Destroyer Duck*, gives the answer.

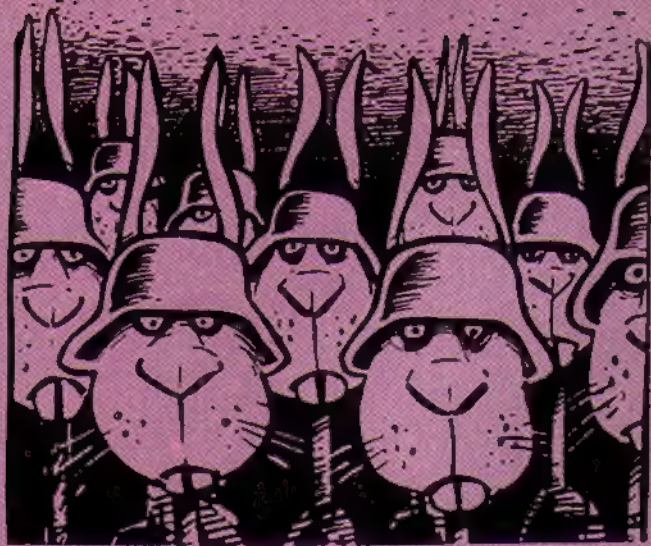
Steve and I had been friends for many years and still spoke on the phone nearly every day even after he moved to the West Coast in the late '70s. When Steve decided to take Marvel to court, he and I spent months trying to devise a publication that would raise money to help fund the lawsuit. Now, with the case since settled out of court, I feel it's safe to reveal some of the decidedly wacky concepts we came up with.

Perhaps the strangest was to be a membership club, a parody of Marvel's F.O.O.M. fan organization. Instead of receiving a giant poster of the Marvel characters and assorted character buttons as you received from F.O.O.M., our club was going to give you something a little bit different. First, there was the button you could proudly wear, demanding, "Make Marvel Mine!" Second, there was the big poster: "We dare you to enter...The House of Ideas!" showing comics writers and artists in a dungeon, each placed on different torture devices. In the foreground, the legs of some giant torturer, twisting the wheel of the rack.

Eventually, however, we narrowed the fundraisers down to two possibilities: Sell 1,000 copies of a \$100.00 limited edition comic book, or sell 100,000 copies of a \$1.00 unlimited edition comic book. It's kind of like the gag in Laurel and Hardy's *March of the Wooden Toy Soldiers*, in which the fellows, working in Santa Claus's shop, mistake an order for 600 toy soldiers one foot tall and make 100 soldiers six feet tall!

Unlike Stan and Ollie, Steve and I got it right and decided on 100,000 comics at \$1.50. We sold





80,000 copies immediately, and everyone involved in the project—penciller Jack Kirby, inker and colorist Steve Leialoha, cover inker Neal Adams, co-editor Mark Evanier, Dan Spiegle, Sergio Aragones, Marty Pasko, Joe Staton, Shary Flenniken, Gordon Kent, and we at Eclipse—donated our efforts gratis.

Aside from the political ramifications, *Destroyer Duck* #1 was a landmark in a number of other ways. It proved that color comics were viable for Eclipse. It introduced Sergio Aragones's "Groo the Barbarian." And, most important for Eclipse's future direction, the person who pitched in to color the back cover while visiting me in New York was none other than Cat Yronwode. I didn't realize at the time that what became the most important romantic involvement of my life would be so vital to Eclipse's future as well. Eclipse's push into color comics wouldn't have been possible without Cat's color expertise and printing experience.

Following *Destroyer Duck* in 1982 were *Sabre* and *Ms. Tree's Thrilling Detective Adventures*, as Cat created her role as head of the coloring department. Elaine Lee and Charles Vess's back-up series in *Sabre*, incidentally, contained the first comics coloring by Lynn Varley.

One of the funniest instances of Cat's devotion to duty at Eclipse occurred, of all places, near the United Airlines ticket counter at San Francisco International Airport. An artist had forgotten to draw a bikini on the major female character in a story, leaving her completely naked on almost every page. Since the script distinctly called for her to be clothed, something had to be done, and fast. The artist had both illustrated and colored the story, and turned in the job late to boot. In order to make the printing deadline, we had color proofs made first and then sent to us for corrections. In fact, the art was turned in so late we had the color proofs shipped via United Airlines' package service directly to the airport so

Cat could check the proofs and get it back to the color engraver the next morning. What she didn't realize until she saw the proofs was the extent of the artist's error. So she spread the proofs out in a circle around her on the floor at the airport and began marking where the black bikini should be.

I went to get a cup of what Raymond Chandler called "the lifeblood of tired men," and when I returned, I couldn't see Cat because she was surrounded by a crowd of twenty or thirty people. They must have thought it an interesting way to pass the time between connecting flights, and when she explained what she was doing, they got into the act, yelling, "There's *another* bare ass" and "Don't forget the bikini on *that* one!"

The job was eventually done, the crowd dispersed to make their various flights, and the book was printed according to the writer's script. I've often wondered since, what with the media brouhaha about "sex and violence" in comics, if those people cheering Cat on at the airport that night think a little better of comics, knowing that the people producing them actually care about making them good.

I'd like to believe so.

By the time 1983 rolled around, and with Eclipse production drastically increased, I moved more into the publishing side of the business and Cat took on more and more of the editorial duties. It was also the beginning of the Eclipse editorial office's trek cross country, stopping briefly in Missouri and ending up here in Northern California (where, contrary to the belief of our friends on the East Coast, the seasons *do* change).

*Next issue: Cat and I move to California and find Sean Deming juggling on a unicycle, while Mark Evanier and Will Meugniot create The DNAgents, Marshall Rogers becomes Cap'n Quick (or was that a Foozle?), and an unpublished Will Eisner gem from the 1940s escapes Will's vault and becomes an Eclipse comic!*



# WHO'S WHO IN TOTAL ECLIPSE



## Miraclewoman

The New Olympian pantheon's Goddess of love, she brings a new morality to London.

Using his powerful intellect and boundless courage, Doc Stearn battles the monsters of the night.

## Mr. Monster



## Beanish

Creator of the fabulous Look • See • Show, this artist is the first bean to journey beyond The Beanworld into unexplored realms.

Beanish's mysterious special friend meets him inside a "secret sketch" every midday.

## Dreamishness



## Masked Man

A crimefighter with a heart of gold, Dick Carstairs is the detective behind the mask.

The Masked Man's sidekick is a reporter chronicling his best friend and hero's fight against the forces of organized crime.

## Barney



## Ms. Tree

Taking on her husband's detective firm when he was slain by mobsters, Ms. Tree continues to wreak rough justice.

Everyone not to be so afraid! Our Nippon hero is to be stopping those who would do bad yet once again!

## Radio Boy



## Mo

This California Girl, a fan of old movies and comic books, joins her sister Max Muldoon at Hollyhock High to study with their friends.

A little more on the wild side than her sister, this Muldoon loves dancing, dating, and her career as half the commercial-starring Twice-Nice twins.

## Max



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## Heroes and Villains

They are drawn into the fray by the powerful schemes of the immortal Zzed, forced to choose sides in the growing war. Across vast time and space, from untold dimensions, the Azure Crosstime Express gathers those who can help.

Zzed's satellites, throwing the earth into the center of a universal eclipse, will soon wield enough power to finally bring the immortal to the brink of death—but Zzed's suicide will also destroy our universe.

The moment is at hand.

Only the ultimate sacrifice can stop Zzed's dream of final peace from becoming a reality. One of the mighty must die to save the universe. The strongest heroes and villains from many worlds prepare themselves for this final confrontation. And billions of lives hang in the balance.

## Total Eclipse

It's Eclipse Comics' Tenth Anniversary. In this and future issues, you'll encounter Airboy, Valkyrie, Skywolf, Miracleman, The Prowler, Strike, the Heap, Aztec Ace and virtually every star from Eclipse's first decade of innovative comics publishing.

**Marv Wolfman**, writer, is the author of *The New Teen Titans*, *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, *Tomb of Dracula*, and countless other acclaimed comic books. The Zzed saga is his most intricate plot to date.

**Bo Hampton**, pencil artist, is well-known for his detailed linework and powerful layouts in books such as *Airboy*, *Lost Planet*, *Luger*, and *The New Mutants*. *Total Eclipse* is a new peak in his artistic development.

**Rick Bryant**, ink artist, has graced the pages of *Miracleman*, *Marvel Fanfare*, *Moon Knight*, and *World of Krypton*. Within *Total Eclipse*, he perfectly complements Hampton's detail with his own dynamic style.

ECLIPSE  BOOKS™

